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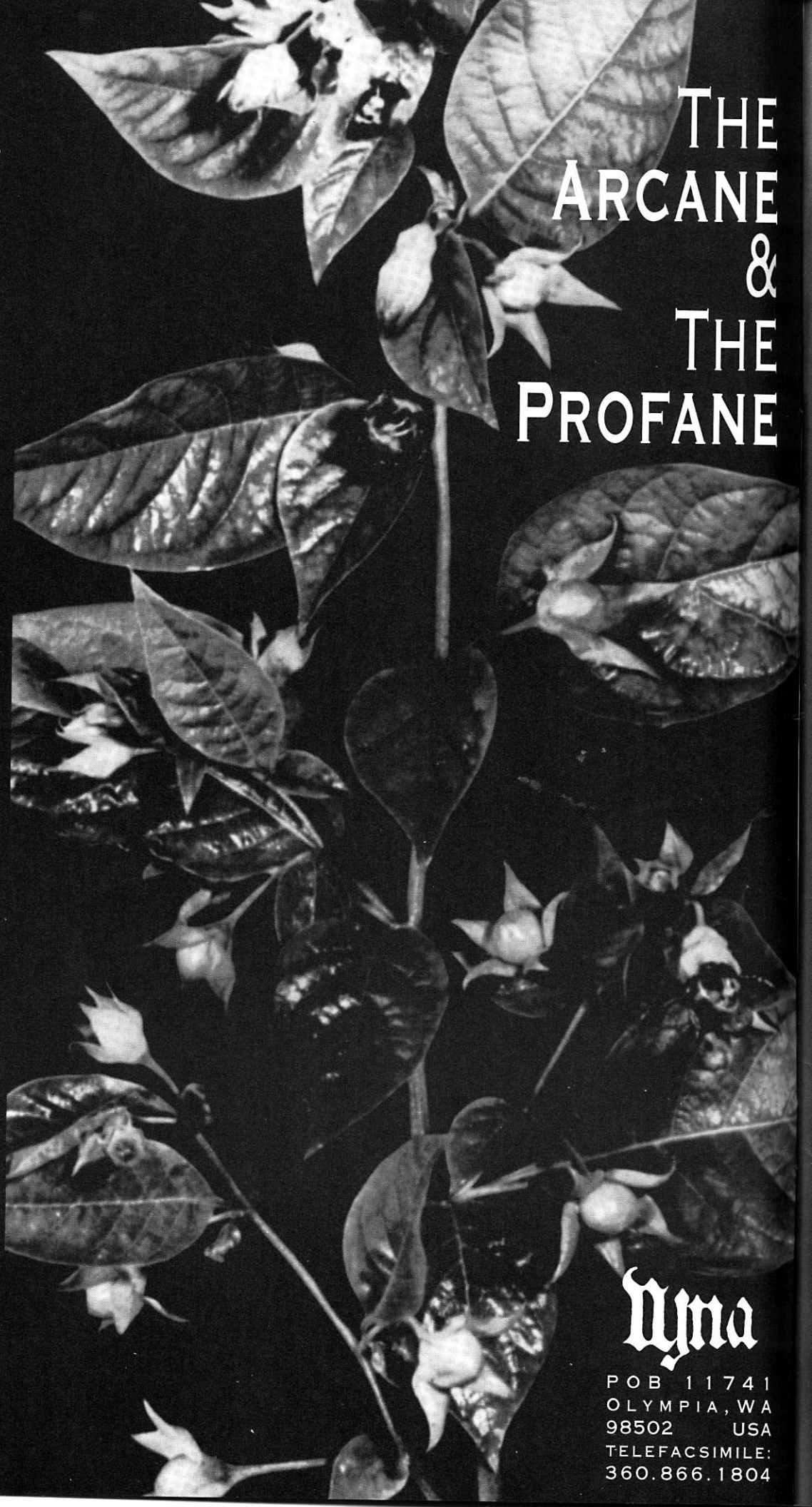

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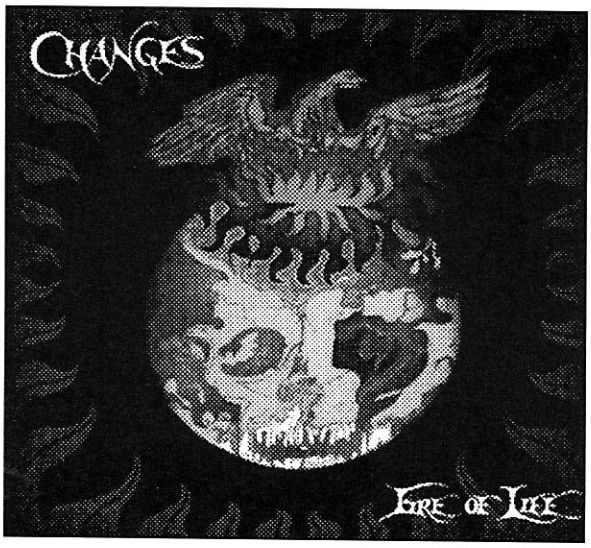

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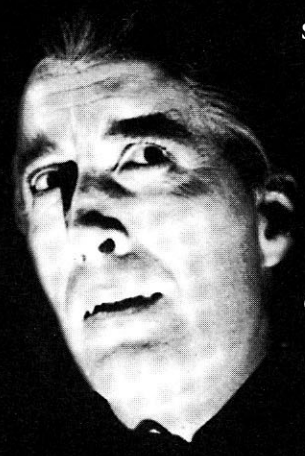

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IT'S STRANGE WHEN YOU REALIZE IN THE COURSE OF DOING THIS SORT OF SHIT THAT YOU CAN'T WRITE TO SAVE YOUR LIFE. DOING INTERVIEWS IS NOT ACTUAL WRITING, IMAGINATION, CLEVER WORDS, ETC DO NOT QUALIFY. REVIEWS... YEAH RIGHT. ESPECIALLY WHEN YOU READ A ZINE LIKE THE MÄDCHEN ISSUE OF **ISTEN** YOU FEEL THAT MAYBE YOU SHOULD PACK IT IN. STILL WE TRIED TO CREATE SOMETHING DIFFERENT AND BETTER THIS TIME, IT MAY SEEM THAT **DESCENT** IS TRYING TO ESCAPE IT'S LARVAL STAGE, AND THAT MAY BE TRUE BUT IT'S NOT THAT WE ARE RUNNING FROM ANYTHING. MOST THINGS BECOME QUITE STALE, MORE OFTEN THAN NOT PENGUINS BECAME LOUSY IN THE SACK , TASTES EVOLVED (THANK YOU TYLER) AND LIFE BECAME REAL (EUROPE SURE HAS DAWNED NEW PERSPECTIVE). ALTHOUGH I CAN'T HONESTLY REALLY SAY THIS IS JUST A HOBBY ANY MORE. THE ASPECT OF MOST PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL IS HORRIFYING, BUT STILL WE HAVE TO CREATE THIS OUT OF OUR OWN OBSESSIONS WITH OBSCURE MUSIC. I HOPE THAT **DESCENT** HOLDS IT'S OWN IN SOME RESPECTS. I GUESS IT DOESN'T REALLY MATTER BECAUSE WHEN IT COMES DOWN TO IT WE'RE BOTH STILL JUST A COUPLE OF FUCKING METALHEADS ANYWAY. DON'T BE FOOLED.

- S T E P H E N -

DESCENT VOLUME FOUR WAS **CREATED** BY STEPHEN O'MALLEY AND TYLER DAVIS AND **PUBLISHED** VIA THE AJNA OFFENSIVE **CONTRIBUTORS** INCLUDE CLAUDIA LUIGI COPPO RODNEY DEWITTE KADMON TIMO KETOLA NIKO SIRKIÄ STATE ART TAINT JEFF WAGNER WREN M.S. **DESIGNED** BY O'MALLEY
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PAN.THY.MONIUM

Well... I had to get up at eight in the morning on a saturday in order to catch this interview last April (1996 that is), but I've been wanting to do this one for a long time (almost as long as the ABRUPTUM!). For those of you who do not know PAN.THY.MONIUM are one of the most interesting bands to emerge from Sweden's underground in the past years, combining a sort of fucked death-metal-jazz fusion with outer space melodies and atmospheres. Raaagooshinaahh soon became the symbol for this strange act and for the longest time they lurked in the «scene's» shadows under their galactical alien guise releasing an EP («Dream II» on Obscure Plasma/Avantgarde) and two full length albums on mighty Osmose (the cult «Dawn of Dreams» and «Khaoos») before returning to the outer limits of obscurity for quite some time. They journeyed back to our planet for one final glimpse of their inverted symphonies last year in the form of «Khaoos and Kon-fus-ion» which was bestowed unto homo sapiens via Relapse records... and a few transmissions were also made through Day Disyraah's human form Dan Swanö to a few select homo galacticus as myself. Read onward to see what was hidden behind the masks all these years...

PAN-THY-MONIUM has always been in the shadows. How did you guys get started?
I just came into this style of music because I wanted to do something completely different. I'd basically done everything in other styles of music and I came across this kind of music and I thought I could probably add something to this that hadn't been done yet. When we started we had pretty restrictive things of what we should do- we should be very complex, we shouldn't tune down the guitars, we should use keyboards a little bit. We had a clear vision but I wanted to do more. We started off PTM as a kind of a side project to EDGE OF SANITY where we actually did all of those things we couldn't do. We tuned down like hell, we used a lot of keyboards, we used vocals where we could sing in any language and no one could tell because it was used like an instrument. We did all the weird rhythms and weird arrangements like having grindcore and handclaps and everything which shouldn't be done. So basically what we were about was the title of the record- we are here to cause chaos and confusion in your mind. That's all we're here for.

What is the deal with the whole concept?
We never had any conceptual lyrics or things like that. We never even concentrated on any lyrics. The vocalist just jammed, the way you play a guitar, just hitting the notes. He'd hit the words. It didn't have any hidden meaning behind it. Anyway, I guess it caused this mysterious thing around the band that we started to mess around with these weird titles just to make us a little but different from all the other bands that talk about fucking forests and all that other crap. We wanted to give our own version and do something that was never done before. So I guess that was my invention was the one that decided the titles and tracks because on the first record we didn't include anything- no titles, no line up, nothing except a strange poem. To cause confusion, to be weird, and it worked. We sold a lot of records and we always had a great laugh about this because underneath the surface of all these mysterious things it was just "how far can we take this".

Was it just a one day experiment?
Yeah. We were trying out the crowd. We were actually labelled as a black metal band but a few lyrics from the first record were taken from the inner sleeve of a hardcore record with society lyrics and "Yeah motherfucker" and that kind of crap. He was singing his lyrics but no one could hear them because you can never hear shit so we were just fooling around with people and making them think we were so mysterious and so evil while we were having a great laugh. When we lost the laughing thing, like we did around 'Khaoos' it wasn't any fun. There was not this big distance. We just had to make this record to fulfil our contract and somehow the magic was gone so we started messing around with music and nothing was special anymore. For the first EP and the first record we had a great deal of fun and that kind of came back after we did 'Khaoos'. We had this huge break but got back together to try and recreate this weird atmosphere. 'Khaoos' was not confusing at all you know, it was basic.

I've read that you didn't like that album at all, but that was my favorite album from your band.
For the EP and for 'Dawn' we were like underground death metal but for 'Khaoos' people who didn't really like... I know a lot of jazz people who came up and said, "Yeah, it's really cool jazz metal, kind of fusion", but I didn't want it to be like that. PTM should be fucking dark and mysterious but somehow when you don't have any inspiration to record you go for the cliches which is what we did. I didn't really do any song writing at all. I just asked the guitar player and the drummer. PTM songs had always been written on the bass and this time they were all guitar based and that's what all the fucking songs in the world are based on. The guitar always being the bass in PTM is different. The bass is up front. But I didn't have time to write any of the material and that's the main reason why I don't like 'Khaoos'. It sounds too normal. Maybe people don't listen to it the same way I do, but to me it's not a good record.

I didn't know what the band was about for the longest time until right before 'Khaoos' came out but I thought it was great because it was the only effective death metal jazz fusion record.
Yeah, I know, but it's not really a PTM record. If you take out the name I can't compare it to the other ones.

Speaking about 'Khaoos' what was the deal with the artwork on that?
We were actually recording a band called HARVEY WALLBANGER in my studio at the time we were doing the finishing touches on the 'Dawn Of Dreams', mastering it and sending away DAT tapes. This band came down the day after and I played some of that record to them and their vocalist, who is actually from the states, he's like a free form artist, painting with weird shit and throwing tomatoes at the canvas and stepping on, rolling over and all this crap, freaking out, painting with dirt and blood. So I told him, "You've heard our music now," and I played him the chaotic parts and I said, "When you get home from this session could you please draw what you heard." I got this roll in the mail and what we did is took out all the weird colours he did and put them in different pieces and at the time I attended a kindergarten and I asked a girl who was always drawing to draw me this monster, like, "Give me your worst monster." She drew that and it had like teeth all over and this weird stuff and I said this is perfect. We just mashed it together with the other one and I think it's pretty cool and so we've done t-shirts with the little monster on it. It's a real horrifying experience. It's like blue with this white monster all over it and nobody bought it. A little too weird I think.

Was PAN-THY-MONIUM more of a studio project or a jamming thing, or what?
From the beginning, actually, we weren't planning on recording anything at all. We just said let's rehearse and tune down and have fun, but we eventually ended up rehearsing in the room that was also the studio at the time before I moved to where I live now. One time when PTM was rehearsing I just accidentally happened to have everything set up for a recording so I said, "Let's record this and just see what happens". It was kind of cool and I added the keyboards afterward and it was not too bad and we found a vocalist because we were just an instrumental 3-piece doing a BOLT THROWER rip off thing, tuning down as low as we could, trying to beat the 'Realm Of Chaos' thing and with the added keyboards and vocalist it was a cool recording and after that it got spread in the underground like the plague. Malmo and I were busy so Benny, the drummer, took over this part and all of a sudden we had all these deals going with this Italian label, Obscure Plasma with 'Dreams II' and then Osmose and BAM!

How did Osmose get interested because up until you guys they were releasing quite a different style than PTM?
The thing was that I was in contact with Herve because he was doing something called Strangulation Distribution and he was buying demos from bands and selling it all over the world and he took a lot of copies of the 'Dawn' demo that we did. He told me once that he was thinking of starting up a label and we would be number one. All right. We'll see what happens and it didn't until, I think, he did 4 or 5 releases before us. He released a SAMAEL record which gave him a lot of money to work with and 'Dawn Of Dreams' was done cheap because I recorded it myself for a little less than $2000, which isn't much at all. The cover picture I took myself in an airplane. Everything that's there may look expensive, but it was cheap.

How did you feel about the older material when the new material came out?
I still think the EP is the best thing we ever did because that is actually the PTM we wanted to create. That's the home. That is it. Those three songs, they are so weird. They were so tuned down. That was the heart. From that one we took it a step and from that one a step further. To me that EP is the ultimate in my vision of what PTM would be like, but when we added my brother who did the saxophone and guitar leads that added to our sound. A new dimension. I don't think you can compare 'Dreams II' with the first album, and I never did that because they were so very different. Maybe we let this guy have too much influence on 'Khaoos', too much saxophone, too much weird guitars and all this. Maybe that's why I don't like it too much. We actually tried to go back to the 'Dreams II' concept for the first song but this one was actually mixed without his contribution, only the bass, guitar, drums and vocals- no keyboards and it was extremely fucking boring. We said this is not gonna work so we quit. It was like the magic was gone. We couldn't really write a cool song without his contribution anymore like we could in '90. I don't know why. I don't know what happened but we decided, "OK. Let's put his work on it"" and this track, we got such a kick out of it that we decided we had to write the out track. And we were thinking of releasing some kind of a parcel pack with three 3" CD singles with a month in between and together they would form the cover. PAN on the first, THY on the second and MONIUM on the third, but after we recorded the second one I moved to the city and the other guys told me it wasn't going to work any

more with me coming over from the city to rehearse. They didn't want to be a studio band. They wanted the music to grow in the rehearsal room so I said, "Ok, let's call it a day". Then I called Jeff from Relapse and he just wanted to hear the tape because he was a big fan and I just told him we've finished it. You can do what you want with it.

PAN-THY-MONIUM was always more spontaneous?
Definitely. We'd do a jam session and we actually had a tape deck going and then we sat down and realized, "This is a good part, let's build a song around this", and that could be two minutes of a one hour jam. The ideas came about spontaneously. No one ever brought a whole song to a rehearsal. Sometimes I had a bass lick I really liked and from that one it would transform into new notes and new tones. That was lost because when I met my becoming wife and we had a child and all this you're not as spontaneous in your life. You live a very planned life. When PTM was at it's peak we were all singles and we could rehearse in the middle of the night. But that's lost and you can not really plan to be spontaneous so I guess we just let it die at the right time.

When did they decide to add your brother on the sax?
I don't remember. I think the drummer heard about his project, a free form jazz band with another sax player, and they were so fucking freaking out, so I think he heard about my brother playing soprano sax in a bucket of water, calling it a submarine sax. I think he asked me once if we could use this on one of the records so I told him to come down and the band was there and it just kept evolving into, "Can you do something here and can you do something here", and we have sax all over the record and the same goes for the guitar licks. We just couldn't be without them. It was adding a totally new dimension and when we were in the studio recording the basic tracks for the record he came down and did some lead guitars and it gave it life because we were pretty sick of it. In a moment like that it's like, "Yeah. Go for it," so we recorded all of these guitars and leads in places we never thought of having leads. Sometimes it was a little over the top and that's what happened with 'Khaoos' cuz the music was so fucking boring that we had to come in there and rescue the whole recording. That was my vision.

The last track of each record is a little bit different. What's up with that?
To be honest, whenever we mix the record we're so fucking into it and I get a little childish and I'm really, really happy so I'm like, "Let's make a strange song! You start the car, I'll bang on the piano, record it and write on the master tapes with a pair of head phones." Bam! Nothing more to it. I like that idea. We're not gonna do more takes. It's pretty strange. It's like this thing we did on the new album where we had like a combination of 60 people sitting in, fans from Germany and whatever , and I guess they were a little confused because I was dragging a microphone into the coffee room. "Talk. Just talk." I think there was like 7 or 8 people in there and we took it back and did another track and we just did that and it was like 60 people in the end and it's just talking and it makes this weird noise. I don't know where it came from but it was so weird we just did it. That's the PTM concept. If it's so strange that you can't do it on record, do it. We could put out a whole record of silence, but we did one minute and that's okay as well.

What was the obsession with the clock for awhile?
It came from the dream thing. The whole EP is a dream from falling deep asleep and in the beginning it's more like you're interrupting someone's sleeping and he hears this clock and he thinks he's having a nightmare. It's a cliche. I'd never heard it when we did it. 'Dawn Of Dreams' was like a continuation of 'Dreams II' and I think that's as far as it went. We didn't have a clock on 'Khaoos' which is another stupid thing , but we took it back for the last one cuz we needed a clock somewhere.

Do you see PTM as an audial concept of dreaming?
Yeah. Pretty much like that. Dreams are so weird and strange, it's like they couldn't happen in real life and I guess PTM's music should be like that. But it happened. Another thing is we're not doing this to satisfy our musical ego. We're doing it to confuse. A lot of bands try to impress but we do it to give them something a little bit different, maybe upset them, I think.

Would you rather your fans didn't understand what you were doing?
I had a friend from the states who was in the studio and he said PTM was the best group to smoke dope to and he was always stoned when he listened to our record. I don't use drugs. I don't have to do that with PTM. That's my drug. It takes me places. He said stoned he saw the structure.

The 60 people talking. Was that on the live track on the album?
It's actually a sample. My brother came to the studio and we were working on this track together and it was so out of tune it sounded like shit. I said if we didn't figure something out we wouldn't be able to use the track and he showed me this crowd sample. I said, "Oh good, let's turn it into a live track." We did the vocals through an amplifier and put the mic feet away from it so it would have a shit PA sound. I think it sounds authentic. It's scary. It's not live.

On your last CD I thought it was commendable that you guys only did three songs, complete songs. It shows you knew when to stop the band. Is there another reason behind that?
No, we had this vision that we should do this 3 song thing, one song on each CD and that meant we could only have like 15 minutes each for the tracks minimum and none of the tracks ended up being that long. We could've done one record with 10 tracks on it which would've been cool, I guess, but we wanted to make long tracks because you can put so much more weird stuff into 10 minutes rather than 3 minutes. I never really saw it because originally it was 3 songs that were linked together but we turned it into one track at a point. "Let's edit it, skip the breaks and put it into one track." I think it was the same for the second track and we just squeezed it together. They were so alike. It's not really the last CD because it's from April '94 to July '95.

What was that track from the CD release of 'Dreams II' from?
The special bonus? We actually took two days to do that track. I don't think it's a good song, but it's another song if your a collector and into the band. Plus it's remastered so on the CD it sounds ten times better. I did that because it's not available on vinyl anymore so I spent time making it sound better.

It seems the covers on the first and second CD's were important or applicable to the music. What's the deal with the cover on the third CD?
One day I was thinking about doing all of this, trying to get all the members together and I needed someone to kick my ass to do it so this guy who did the layout and drawings for 'Dreams II' just dropped me this big envelope and said, "Here's a sample of what I'm doing now. Get in touch." I saw this crucifixion and since PTM is dead it needs a burial, so that was actually what got me going.

How would you like PAN-THY-MONIUM to be remembered?
The weirdest band in the metal scene. To the guys that actually sat down and listened to our records carefully we are. We dispelled all the names in English and tried to freak out everything, even the language. We didn't leave anything untouched. We had no respect for anything. Avantgarde.

Avantgarde. That's an interesting term to use.
As long as it's weird it doesn't matter to me.

Waldteufel

Markus Wolf's WALDTEUFEL have blessed upon us only one seven inch as of yet, but we were suitably impressed with this effort (which also contains ex-AMBER ASYLUM member Annabel Lee's collaboration). While neo-pagan music might be a vast generalization of a description of this project's sound, it can give you readers a small glimpse of what to expect. Contrarily, the seven inch we are sure represented only a framework of what to expect from this conceptual group, and we are sincerely looking forward to the next efforts. We spoke with Markus for a brief look into the structure of WALDTEUFEL.

Explain the name WALDTEUFEL.
Loosely translated WALDTEUFEL means 'forest devil'. One imagines little mischievous creatures in the woods, but it also denotes the christian fear of the dark realms of the woods, which are conversely embraced and respected in the heathen consciousness. Many European folktales survive in which the forest is an 'evil' place to be avoided; in some tales, the old god Wotan is replaced by the figure of the Devil. All this played a role in my choice of this name. It popped into my consciousness and later I remembered that it's also the last name of a French waltz composer, Emile WALDTEUFEL. Very fitting since I want to do some waltzes.

Why have you chosen text in the Germanic tongue?
One of the precepts of this project is the exclusive use of German, whatever it's form(old, high German, dialects, etc.) in text and lyrics. This is no attempt to be cryptic or elitist, I merely feel comfortable using my native language. Annabel is very proficient in German as well, since she lived there during her childhood. I have unearthed many excellent but obscure poems and songs to cover and am writing lyrics in German. Certain concepts and ideas can be more poetically and succinctly expressed in German, in my opinion. And hopefully WALDTEUFEL can play a little part in preserving the integrity and beauty of a language endangered by foreign influences.

Will you be focusing on European heritage for inspiration with WALDTEUFEL?
As I've already stated, the lyrical content is dominated by German material. Musically, however, Annabel and I draw from a wide variety of European and probably non-European traditions, especially when we try to cover traditional songs in a new way.

What is the purpose of WALDTEUFEL?
The goal and purpose is simply to delve into a rich heritage using music and the graphic arts. This means that the first 7", while being the outward product of our efforts, as a record is only a faint reflection of the role all these arts play in our 'daily' lives. The goal is to fuse 'art' back to 'life' in a true völkisch way. This includes efforts to rebirth communal 'folk' music and to infuse our music with spontaneous play and invention as well as skill. WALDTEUFEL concerts, when and if they happen, will embody these goals.

What other contributions have you spent your time with?
After thoroughly rethinking MINOTAURUS, the magazine I was doing a couple of years ago, I decided to put it aside for now. Now I'm slowly assembling WOLFSZEIT, a journal concerned with Nordic culture. It will include pieces by Kadmon, R.N. Taylor and others in addition to my writings and art. I'm also contributing to VOR TRU and the German music magazine SIGILL. One of my drawings is being used by NEUROSIS for their banners for the "Oz Fest" tour and on their t-shirts and a painting of mine will appear on the cover of a new GERALDINE FIBBERS 7".

Why did you choose to dedicate the 7" to Orff?
Orff has been a favorite composer of mine since childhood. Unfortunately, aside from the "Carmina Burana" his works are little known and almost never performed. Many of them are very ambitious, fusing theater and choral music in a way that harks back to ancient Greek theater, yet is very new as well. I think he will be remembered as the greatest German composer of the 20th century. The vocals on "Der Grosse Rausch" were very inspired by Orff so it seemed natural to dedicate it to him on his 100th birthday. The next 7" will be dedicated to the music of the early 19th century composer Carl Maria van Weber.

Were you to be involved with the 'Mysteria Mithrae' compilation?
Yes, but other commitments did not allow me to finish the track. I had already finished a painting and graphics for the booklet. But this year WALDTEUFEL will contribute to a compilation dedicated to Julius Evola from the German 'Eis und Licht' label as well as an American compilation entitled 'Ultra!'.

How strong are your ties to the European community?
I was born in Köln on the Rhine and still have relatives there and in Dresden. Since I became involved in music over here I have made new ties through the mail and also have met a lot of good people on my trips over there. My strongest bonds are probably with Cthulhu Records and ALLERSEELEN. I certainly keep in touch with most things happening in Europe and do not rule out moving back at some point.

What geographies most inspire you?
Most natural terrain is inspiring, even deserts, but recently I've been yearning for a more alpine environment, which is one of the reasons for the move to Portland. I like the vastness of American landscapes but the human historical aspect is missing, what in Germany is called 'cultural landscape'. Those human aspects are what define a 'homeland' and they don't exist here except for this crude pioneer history which I'm really not that interested in.

If you could live in any time and place, where would it be and why?
Probably at the beginning of this century so I could witness the Volkisch resurgence first hand. Or maybe sometime around Charlemagne's time to see the violent changeover to Christianity in northern Germania. Durer's time would be interesting although it pains me to see all this wasted artistic talent from the middle ages on. Wasted on depicting the same Madonna and child, the same stations of the cross. With few exceptions, like Bosch, Brueghel or Goya, all art after the Christianization was sponsored by the church or alienated kings and nobles and therefore the results are only technically impressive to me. It was only with the advent of Romanticism and Romantic Nationalism that artists looked to the myths and traditions of their own people for subject matter. That was a powerful resurgence that was only stopped by the spread of international modernism. But for many Europeans this search for identity has never stopped, which is why all this Celtic stuff and movements like Asatru are around and growing..

WALDTEUFEL, POB 17656, Portland, OR, 97217-0656, USA

Der Grole Rausch The Great Ecstasy

The Anvil sings
the sparks they fly
(O hear my hammer)

Percussive sound pours down
around us
(hear my hammer)

Resonate and spread!
From a spark to a flame

In rolling waves, the eternally living
stride through the glowing fields.
A flood of sunlight on all the
dancing figures. The great Intoxication.
They want to drown in their own
blood. Who was it that poured the
steel into their hearts?

I harvest delicious grapes among the
hostile thorns.

Today it's my turn, tomorrow it is your
turn (to die).

We arise, we are absorbed by the
great ecstasy.

Dødheimsgard

DØDHEIMSGARD is probably best known for it's line up (which has included members of DARKTHRONE, EMPEROR, ZYKLON-B, AURA NOIR, VED BUENS ENDE, etc.) rather than it's music. To most of the 'underground Black Metal market/scene' this is the most important aspect, unfortunately. But we can only recommend their two releases, 'Kronet Til Konge' and 'Monumental Possession' as true underground Black Metal in a pure sense of quality and obscurity. Our ally Rodney De Witte from Belgium was fortunate enough to provide us with a chat with the possessed Vicotnik.

Just released is the second DØDHEIMSGARD album, 'Monumental Possession'... can you simply give some words on the outcome of the release?
The most important thing to me is that we progressed a bit, and made a strong distance between repeating what we had done previously on 'Kronet Til Konge'. The album is, of course, far from perfect, but the imperfection creates a strong foundation on which to build new material. The music was recorded in December 1995 so the delays in it's release are incredibly annoying, but the whole process has been extremely slow in most aspects. 'Kronet Til Konge' was more successful than we were predicting, considering it isn't really an interesting album... another thing is that we have used three different vokalists on the 'new' album to create some sort of dynamic and to draw in your ear. Perhaps we have made the album a bit more interesting with this aspect.

As tedious as it seems we'd like to know about your influences and how they have effected DØDHEIMSGARD. How would you describe the music of the band as well?
I think, when it comes to influences on what we have recorded to date, the main ones are DARKTHRONE ('A Blaze...' in particular) as well as SLAYER and DESTRUCTION. I would describe the DØDHEIMSGARD material produced to date as simply Satanic Black Metal considering that both of the albums are quite Anti-Christian (especially 'Kronet Til Konge') and deal with dark topics based on an experience of moral depravity and decay. Our forthcoming third album contains a more blurred concept as to avoid unnecessary (collective) advertising and propaganda for those we don't care for or about. To keep it simple I call it Black Metal instead of some alternate non-meaning description which, in the end, ends up being more interesting than the music of the band it is meant to describe. Still I hope the album will come out sounding similar to a... factory?

What primarily has changed the music of DØDHEIMSGARD compared to the earlier stages of the band?
The most important thing is that, gradually, we have in fact changed, evolved and escalated, from becoming better or worse in relations to what occupies us to finding new interests. This has of course influenced us to some extent and we also intentionally do things differently upon each album. Since I and Aldrahn formed this band and have composed all except one song, which was written by Apollyon, on both albums and I have composed all of the current material I don't think the line up changes have had any significant control over the music and it's small escalations.

Some of the members are also participating in bands such as EMPEROR and ZYKLON-B... does this directly influence the compositional style? Also Fenriz was participating in earlier stages...
If you collect all of the common superficial aspects surrounding a band such as : labels, music style, the public image, etc. then you are always bound to find some sort of links or connections. Other than that, the band operates individually. Regarding Fenriz, it was a severe case of undetermination. At one point he was about to quit all of the bands he was involved with, then just a few... he even said once that the only band he wanted to be part of was DØDHEIMSGARD. This really caused a lot of intrusion and unbalance within the band. After some time, both we and Fenriz agreed that if he left it would be the best option for all of us, and it probably was as well.

So how did the concept and drive for creating 'Monumental Possession' emerge?
I gain inspiration from elemental experience and often, this is directly expressed through my compositions or communication... although sometimes not at all. It still always becomes part of my memory and recollection and it is through reminiscence that the experience becomes elevated. This allows the inspiration to be reborn again through the strength of the memories. Still, the main purpose of gathering inspiration is gain of knowledge and information. Making music on the other hand, depends on me first as a musician, secondly as an artist and mainly if I'm simply up to it or not. The drive of DØDHEIMSGARD as a band berthed 'Monumental Possession' in the end.

DØDHEIMSGARD?
... is Norwegian and translates roughly to 'The Kingdom of Death' or 'Spectral World'. The name has no special meaning to me, and I dare say that the choice of this name was mainly due to the rather large black empty hole where the other name alternatives should have been. It has no importance.

Do you think the current Black Metal scene is still over reacting?
The other day, I was in a record shop for the first time in about six months and I can honestly say I didn't recognize 80% of the Black Metal albums that could have been obtained in this shop. Then again, I haven't been reading too many zines lately either. My point is, I don't really have a clue about how extensive this 'scene' has become. But of course I see that this is worldwide. Here in Norway, the 'scene' contains mostly people I don't particularly care for. It is because of the fruitlessness I expose myself to while speaking or otherwise communicating with them. Truly harmless. The 'scene' here has become cyclic and mechanical with most bands repeating themselves and each other.

You opinion of the typical Black Metal trappings such as bloodletting, etc.?
Blood drinking or slashing my arms isn't really a huge part of my daily activities at the present (although I almost cut off my right arm once), if I was to kill an animal it would have been purely out of pleasure or , of course, a threatening situation. Burning churches has lost it's symbolism by this time.
"No one, can in truth, rest for even one moment without trying his/her functions through action, for helplessly, we are all driven to act out from our abilities."

Your perception of your perfect 'world'? What would you do (or do you really care) to make this world better? Dreams?
My imaginary 'worlds' are made of thoughts and substance which I've gained in this world. So, what I say or think is not in any way limited or restricted to stay the same without any ability to be said or thought better. Nevertheless, I would prefer to not be bodily present (but still capable of a smile), in open space surrounded by all of my bubbles, "The rest of me" (or maybe in a bubblebath.) Then you have sleep, the one from which you gain no dreams. They relate to and with the perceivable, and can (perhaps) make you sense things which are beyond Nothing. Lastly, you have sleep invoked dreams, these are unmeasured and unlimited, this sleep relates to the state of senselessness. These are all related... if you practice your senses and function organs though the mind you can obtain from the senses the perceivable and the senseless in blend, regardless of present state or time.

You view and relation towards evil?
The word evil (and also good) is a term one chooses and uses to limit, catagorize and simplify one's cause and understanding. These terms make an artificial homogeny between things, simplifying comprehension, threatening the opposition (and vice versa), and creating visualization, black and white (Yin/Yan). It's all quite useless. I further believe evil is a presence which is provoked on you through the intense sensation felt by 'witnessing' it. It puts you in a fragile and exploitable position, crippling your ability of exploring it's presence.
Again, quite useless.

What is following for DØDHEIMSGARD?
We are preparing the third album. The album will be recorded by the end of the year 1997, if we are lucky. As a in prelude to it, we will release a CD single entitled 'Satanic Art'. A tour with GORGOROTH will happen before the end of the year.

Any words left for the black-minded?
"Hello , Mr. Mind to Feet, my name is Mr. Dead Meat, may I call you Slick, like in slick makes me sick"... Vicotnik

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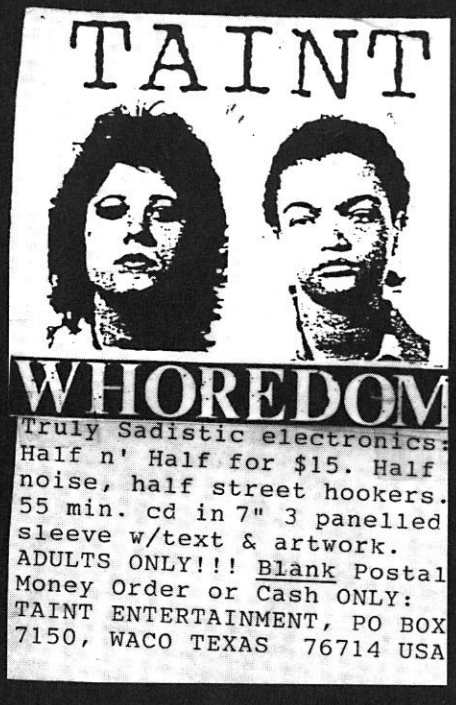
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CON-DOM

CON-DOM is one of England's most critical power electronic artists of the late 80's and 90's with several releases in all format's to their credit (not that this fact justifies importance unto itself). While fucking interview introductions try to explain some extent of the featured artists repitoire, I can only recommend you experience CON-DOM's extreme onslaught firsthand, as it will lead to true appreciation from any EXTREME sound fanatics. Mainman Mike talks to Bane about some of the topics we're dealing with here...

CON-DOM. Control Domination. Please elaborate.
CON-DOM is CONTROL DOMINATION is the ruling concept. Control, domination, manipulation, organization.... The forces of control hold sway- mass culture, mass media, mass mentalities... politics, religion, society, education... The mission, the overriding principle is an ongoing illumination/ exposure of the cancers of CONTROL and DOMINATION.

Your "logo"(man with wrists tied, but still raised above his head in defiance) represents what to you?
The CON-DOM 'logo' or symbol is a graphical representation of the fundamental themes of CONTROL and DOMINATION. Man shackled and brought to his knees- humbled and yet still reaching skyward, erect- a fusing of both his miserable condition and yet his latent potential and capacity for renaissance.

Would CON-DOM be synonymous with reaction and resistance?
Reaction and resistance represent legitimate responses to the control forces and as such demand our attention. The tools and mechanisms of those forces demand equal attention. CON-DOM holds a mirror to both but is synonymous with neither. What is reflected may however be inspirational or instructive to those who care to look and see what is possible or achievable.

Could your work be called political?
CON-DOM is staunchly apolitical. It espouses the doctrine of neither left nor right, nor of any points between. But neither does it discriminate or shy away from the subject of politics, or from the politically inclined, irrespective of their persuasion.
In so far as CON-DOM is concerned with all extremes of thought and behavior- as both manifestations of or reactions to CONTROL and DOMINATION- it is concerned with both the theory and practice of politics. But politics is but one facet of the ruling concept; merely one contributory cause of the human malaise. CON-DOM aims to stimulate self-analysis in relation to politics, as one of many infections. It does not aim to provoke thought about politics in itself, as in itself it is unworthy of serious thought.

Your voice is a reactionary one. Do you think others would view it thusly?
Reactionary= retrograde tendency, implies conservatism, retrenchment, a resistance to change. CON-DOM is none of these things. CON-DOM seeks to divine an individual way forward , within a control-fixated world, by documenting the symptoms of and manifest antidotes to the fixation.
The way in which others view CON-DOM does not concern us. Those who look and see may learn something to their advantage. Those who look and see nothing, or look and see falsely(eg. a voice of reaction) will learn nothing- that is their problem.

You have been performing under this moniker for over 12 years now. Have you achieved your goals? Can you discuss the evolution: progressions and realizations.
The work of CON-DOM has no tangible goals which, once achieved, would obviate the need for its existence. The ruling concept is such that the raison d'etre will never disappear.
CONTROL and DOMINATION are inexhaustible seams of matter. The nature of those seams may change, both over time and in response to continual mining, but they are by definition ineradicable. And as the nature of the beast evolves, so will CON-DOM evolve and adapt to better reflect the new reality.
The past 14(not 12!) years serve to illustrate the evolutionary process. An early concentration on right wing ideology and Christianity was followed, firstly, by a more conceptual examination of the nature of mass religious faith, and subsequently by a preoccupation with the concept of 'faith' itself- moving away from religion into the realm of the personal- the realm of individual belief and philosophy. The '8th Pillar' manifestations are central to this change of emphasis.
This process has also seen a parallel shift away from work of an exclusively destructive nature- ie. exposing hypocrisy, revealing the sham of authorized control systems. "The Eighth Pillar" signaled a new constructivist approach- illustrating the possible; demonstrating ways forward, but not providing answers or solutions or positing yet another 'church', 'temple', or movement for the feeble to cling to.
More recently work such as "Acts of Faith", 'The Sermon' series and the newly released "The Beautiful" and "War Against Society" continue the twin trends of evolving concerns, and constructivism set against the relief of savage indictment.

The music field you seem to be a part of comes from numerous angles and approaches, yet these separate tangents remain loyal to one another solely through the intensity of the sound.
CON-DOM indeed has many contacts worldwide within what may be termed the 'global experimental music network'- the 'music field' to which you refer. Although we would take issue with the classification of CON-DOM as 'music'. However, the fidelity with those contacts relates more to functional artist-consumer, artist-label and artist-distributor relationships than it does to wide ranging artist-artist loyalties based on sound intensity.
Those closely allied to CON-DOM artistically are small in number and bound to us by virtue of a broadly shared purpose, massage, approach and intelligence. It is these factors together with intensity of sound that earns our stinting loyalty, not the sound alone.

What would you contribute to the growing interest in CON-DOM and harsh noise to in particular?
Harsh noise has attracted audiences bored with so-called 'industrial' dance music and myriad metal/core sub-genres, and in search of real extremity in sound.
The growing interest in CON-DOM reflects the manifest intelligence in our work and the superiority of our 'noise with content' approach over the legions of ' noise for noise sake' merchants.

Please tell us about your recent releases.
The 3CD set incorporating "The Beautiful" (Amerika attacked, expansion of musical techniques, lengthy tracks...)
The Sermon Series: Your interpretation of the seven deadly sins? Are you satisfied with the realization of these as a series based on the different executions by the labels.
The collaboration 7" on Praxis.
"The Beautiful" deals with America as both an example of and metaphor for CONTROL and DOMINATION in practice within a nation state. The tracks draw on American popular music, the southern gospel blues tradition, native American Indian culture, nuclear testing, Hollywood, Genghis Khan and the wild west/cowboy ethos to construct an ironic critique of the so-called 'land of the free, home of the brave'.
The choice of America seemed entirely apposite given the release of the work on an American label and the profile it will receive amongst an American audience.
The 'sound techniques' employed represent more a return to the style of "The Eighth Pillar" than an expansion of technique, with extensive utilization of voice loops and music/voice samples. The conceptual nature of the work and length of tracks invite further '8th Pillar' comparisons, although the length of tracks in itself has no significance- a track is as long as it is.
Questions as to the integrity of the set as a whole should be addressed to Red Stream. We see no conceptual links and none were ever posited, save for the extremity of approach, subject matter and sound which characterizes each group.
The 'Sermon' series of 7 X 7's was inspired by the cover of a 1975 edition of the Christian Nationalist Crusade magazine "The Cross and The Flag", proclaiming "Seven Reasons Why I Love My saviours Jesus Christ". Each 'Sermon' is a skewed, ironic take on a Christian concept, interpreting it in the context of control culture. As a point of information, all seven 'Sermons' will be drawn together in a limited edition set of 25 copies only for Easter 1997 release. The set will feature a booklet and bonus '8th Sermon' 7" and will be packaged with an authentic church lectern and lavishly embroidered lectern frontal.
We are entirely satisfies with the work of all participating labels, and worked closely with each in order to achieve satisfactory artwork and design.
The "Familiedrama" collaboration for Praxis was the idea of close Belgian allies THE MILITIA ORGANIZATION. They proposed a piece based on a sound reconstruction of a true family murder, in which a local Belgian businessman shot his wife and children before turning the gun on himself. MILITIA provided a basic soundtrack to which we added narrative sound effects and voice. The result is neither typically CON-DOM nor MILITIA, but possesses a disturbing power true to the spirit of both.

How many tours have you undertaken? How successful were each? Will you continue to travel with your sounds?
CON-DOM has conducted 3 performance tours of the US, 2 of Europe and 1 each of Japan and Taiwan, as well as numerous other foreign assaults.
Measurement of 'success' is largely irrelevant to us and entirely relative to the criteria used. Each 'tour' provided an important experience of different cultures, a chance to meet with allies and 'network' contacts, and most importantly an opportunity to give full vent to CON-DOM as a multi-media operation. We make no money from touring(rather the contrary) and are just as likely to perform for an audience of 10 as for a hundred- but then the attraction of a hundred morons hardly constitutes success.
Live performances is integral to CON-DOM and as such we will continue to execute live assaults throughout the world as opportunities present themselves.

How did you discover Lawrence? Do you see the "Affectation" that Lawrence describes in yourself and your work.
Our interest in Lawrence was first aroused by CLUB MORAL in 1988 when we were invited to provide a film/video contribution to CLUB MORAL's "100 Years Lawrence of Arabia- Man of Action" memorial exhibition in Antwerp. The film idea slowly developed into a multi-faceted concept work comprising LP project, booklet, live manifestation and slide projections, and subsequent live performance documentation.
If by 'affectation' you are suggesting that the image, stance and message of CON-DOM is put-on, less than genuine, then definitely 'No', there is no affectation is our work.
If , alternatively, you are probing a certain artificiality of manner or pretense within our work, then 'Yes'. CON-DOM frequently employs first person role-play- the adoption of a particular stance

or persona appropriate to a theme(eg. the serial killer, rapist, faith healer)- in order to more effectively convey ideas, thoughts or feelings.

I've read only one interview elsewhere, but you continually refer to CON-DOM as more than music. How far do the tentacles reach?
CON-DOM is truly and demonstrably a multi-media operation- extensive live use of 8mm silent film and slide projection, video releases, print media(publications and interviews- this is the eighth CON-DOM interview, including one tape interview release), the utilization of performance art devices, product packaging as artefact/statement and participation in exhibitions, all bear testament to this fact.

Religion seems almost an obsession. Is this due to it's saturation in all walks of daily life. It's all pervasiveness?
Religious faith, particularly Christianity, and belief in God as the source of meaning in life, are indeed major CON-DOM preoccupations. Their all pervasiveness is certainly a factor in this- even though fewer and fewer people attend church on a regular basis, a fundamental belief nonetheless influences/infects most peoples' lives, through christening, marriage and death rituals. But it is the spurious and pernicious justification which it provides for human existence which makes it such an enduring target, set against CON-DOM's championing of a strong individual and personal faith.
It is the deep-rootedness of religious faith, together with the bedrock meaning it gives to so many peoples' lives, that demands constant attention. It is necessary to focus on the concept of meaning in life as that meaning is both fundamental to CON-DOM aims and fundamental to individual existence. It is equally essential that the falsehood and hypocrisy inherent in religious faith be consistently exposed if its deep-rooted tentacles are to be weeded out- it is just too ingrown in our collective psyche and society to be eradicated by simply ignoring it.
The blasphemous(and therefore illegal) element inherent in any 'attack' on religion provides added justification for our persistence.

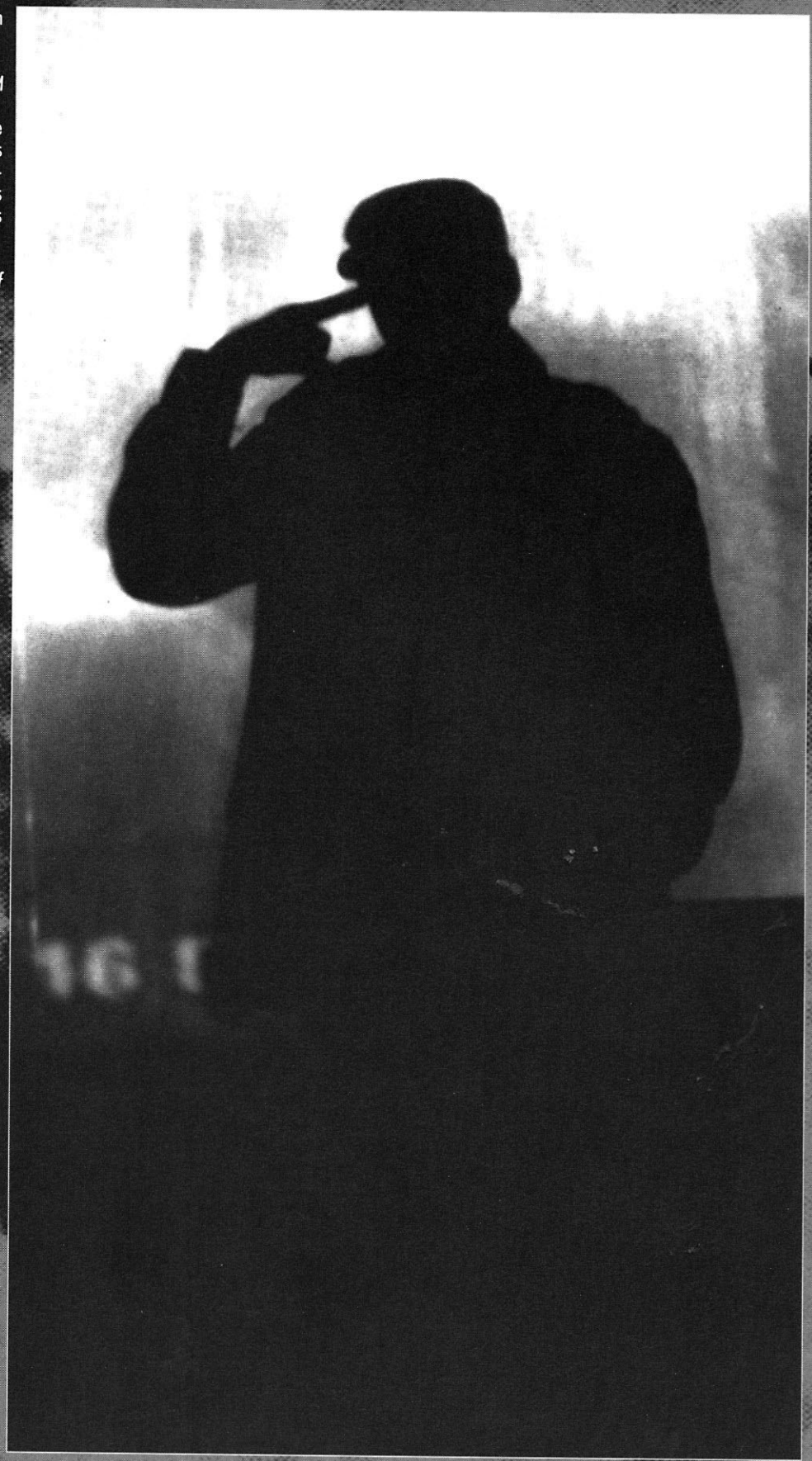
I sense a touch of the homo-erotic within your work.
Any homo-erotic nuances in our work are purely coincidental or by-products of particular preoccupations or subjects, eg. Lawrence.
The use of the body as a very physical/intense means of direct or symbolic expression is however very much a part of the CON-DOM experience, particularly in our film(eg. past symbolic use of masturbation) and live work(eg. self-infliction of pain through cutting, scratching etc.; physical audience contact).

Is your projection solely intellectual?
CON-DOM is food for mind, soul and spirit. They in turn may stimulate bodily action.
CON-DOM itself has no direct physical expression outside of its artistic and intellectual terms of reference. That is not to say that it never will.

Could you ever see yourself becoming content in this life?
In that the raison d'etre of CON-DOM will never disappear, and the mission/struggle will therefore continue- No, except for the contentment inherent in the carrying out of the mission.
In that CON-DOM is an expression of self; a personal search for an individual faith.... the search will continue until there is no longer any need to seek. As to whether the search will end with contentment...

What blazes the road to future glory?
The future holds to prospect of glory- only the preservation of sanity in a system which would smooth away all rough edges, all awkward corners, that we may become perfect wound pegs ideally matched to the perfect round holes in which they would place us.

CON-DOM, 9 Vespar Terrace, Kirkstall, Leeds LS5 3JP, UK



ATRAX MORGUE

Marco Corbelli is the madman behind Italy's deadly ATRAX MORGUE whom you may recognize from it's two CD releases in 1996 and dozens of cassettes on several European noise labels over the years. Mr. Corbelli is also the manager of Italy's SLAUGHTER PRODUCTIONS, a label whom has released numerous items with dozens of groups from GREY WOLVES to CON-DOM, TAINT to ARCHON SATANI and MEGAPTERA. We spoke to him regarding these aspects as well as posed a small psycho-analysis... enjoy.

The beginning and his influences:
I started with the label Slaughter Productions and my project ATRAX MORGUE in 1993. The Slaughterhouse was born. When I started with the label I was really influenced and fascinated by the Swedish label CMI. This can be easily understand if you listen to one of the first SP releases: the V/A Death Odors. The compilation CD enclosed some Swedish bands as MEGAPTERA, RAISON D'ETRE, ARCHON SATANI, etc...But going on, I never wanted to release only death-industrial. Now I just want to release a bit broader spectrum. Noise, power electronics, experimental, concrete... And first of all my label was/is the bridge to promote my own personal project ATRAX MORGUE.

Philosophy of your efforts:
Communication- fetishism- passion. I think these are 3 keys of the philosophy behind Slaughter Productions. Sometimes I find very hard to set the work regarding Slaughter and the work regarding ATRAX MORGUE because they are really different kind of works.
I enjoy most of the product I've released. Now I don't care to follow a selected style. I've just set my catalogue in 4 sections: Death-Industrial/ Ambient-Atmospheric soundtracks/ ATRAX MORGUE/ Power electronic noise. I'm not rich, I live for the day, so this choice [of releasing primarily cassettes] is also for financial problems. But, in any case I love to release cassettes because I like to work on the packaging (sometimes with special artwork) and I like the idea to be able to produce everything inside my home.

So, Cold Meat Industry was an influence on your work as well?
Yes, when I listened to the early CMI stuff I was really amazed. I liked the idea of an industrial music in a darker vein. It was the time. I see that the label is at the top now. I see that some CMI releases are not particularly in the same vein as the early; but that don't hurt me very much. I consider Mr. Karmanik a good guy because I love his personal project BDN; and I think that he express more of himself into BDN than in CMI.

How about working with Release with the «Sickness Report» CD?
Release entertainment contacted me last year with the purpose of a contract regarding the release of 3 ATRAX MORGUE CDs in 3 years. Of course I am very glad to work with a label as RELEASE/RELAPSE and I am satisfied with the release of 'Sickness Report' CD. I know, the power electronic genre is increasing, with a lot of bands, a lot of releases and also a lot of interest. I really can't imagine the future of this genre(I don't see future for anything!!). I always thought that noise and power electronics was only for a few fanatics and for extreme and terminal people. I really hate any trends.

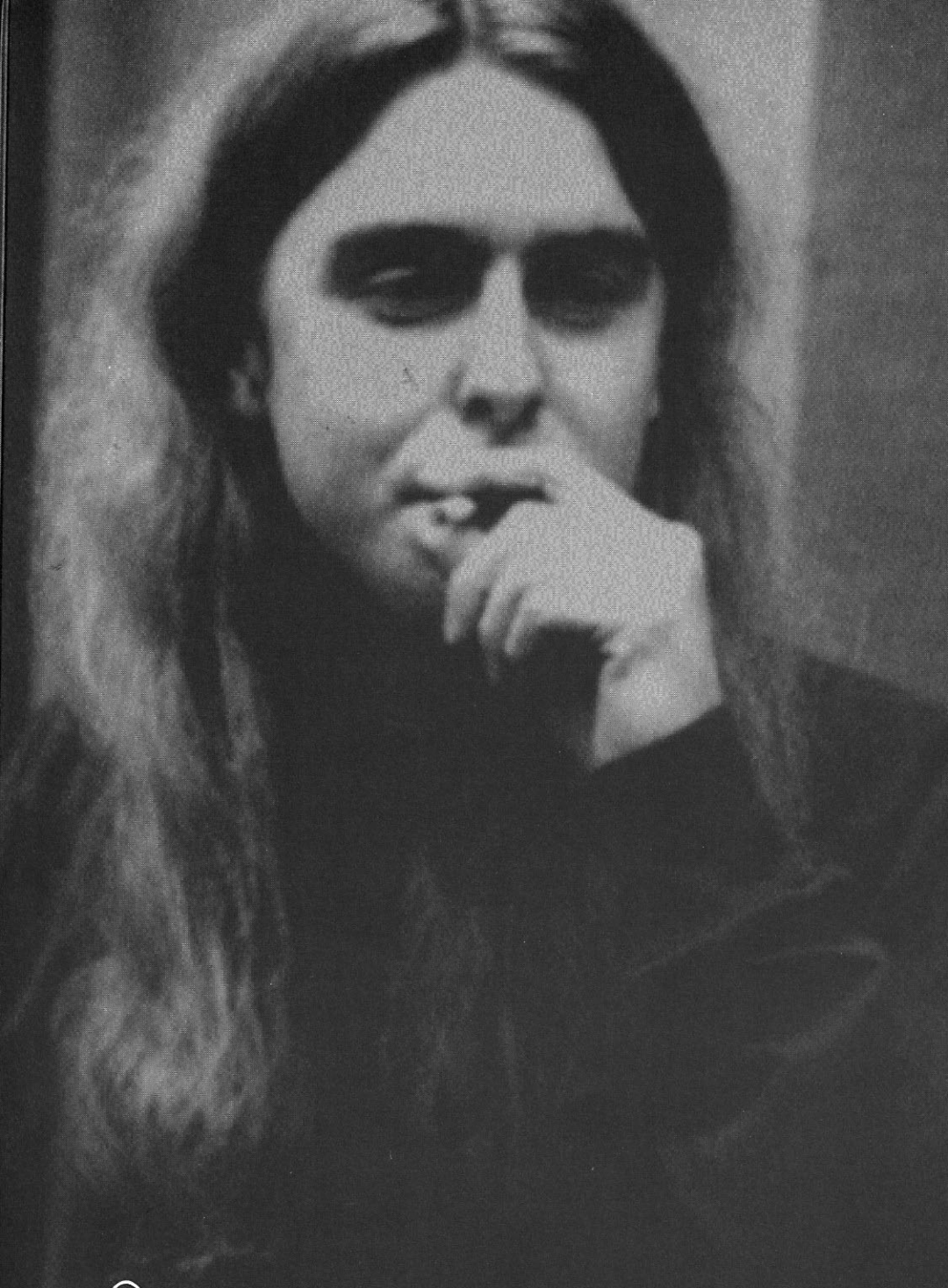
ATRAX MORGUE sounds:
The sounds I use are minimal, freeze, sharpened and psychopathically deranged. I put out spontaneously what I have inside at the moment of the execution of a track. Nothing is programmed. Because this is part of my philosophy; nothing is programmed and everything can happen unfortunately out of control. I have care to do it for myself. I don't care to do it for everyone. It's strictly personal. I never do music but actions- I use my synth as a weapon. Negative forces and psychic crimes through the power of sounds.
Now I live in my sweet, cruel world of personal obsessed mind. There was only my illness that grows inside me like a cancer and that destroyed my mind and my life. It was an hard fight against my inner fears. And the fear of lost my holy control. Because disease is stuff for humans. I'm feeling not a human. Oh, yes you will say: Fuck off! you're a fucking human, like me, like all!! FUCK OFF! I'm feeling not a human- not another fucking mess!!! I disagree more things with humans.
I am constantly attracted by that things which disturb and scare me- because fear is a key: you must be into your ears to analyze them and to destroy them.
I was recovered at the psychiatric hospital in September 96, after an attempted suicide. I suffer of violent change of humor and sometimes it's dangerous. I find the hospital a very nice place to fit my obsessions. And I also find young nice nurses very sexy and attractive. Who aren't scared of the hospital? Come on... maybe the hospital is more scaring than death; for some...

Visual approach to your sounds:
Yes, some of my tracks there's something of visual approach, a sort of soundtrack of my deranged visions and ideas. In most cases, each track have a particular "sense" and "significate". The sound is cold, glacial and throbbing- with improvised squeezy outbursts.
I try to put into my "music" all my obsessions. i like to explore my dark desires and what troubles me. I am constantly obsessed by death, violence, sex, disease, etc. in all the aspects. No, I'm not violent and I don't like gratify violence. I like to explore and I'm interested in the brutal testimonials of human condition. What seems unbelievable but that is fucking real. I'm an outsider; I reject society- society reject me. With a lot of pleasure!!! When I started reading some true crime books- and books about the study of murderer's behavior- I was hit. That's because I find in me more things in common with Dahmer(except the homosexuality and the killings!!). Something like his extreme shyness and his life in a private world of obsessions.
The wish to kill is hidden into everyone, it's human nature and I think that only the intelligent, introspective deep persons are able to explore this dark side of the human mind..
I am very focused about the question of control over myself. Total Control. I'm more into autolesionism but I don't obtain sexual or psychic pleasure to sound my body: but control and power.

So your opinion on your releases then...
Honestly I have a HATE/LOVE relationship with my releases and what I do. "Cut My Throat" was a very spontaneous and improvised action and I think the sounds express very well my character- obsessive, deranged, masochistic and with heavy bolts of humour. Maybe it's the most personal work I've made. It was a rapture of that moment. Schizophrenia. Sometimes I listen to it- and I'm feeling like a murderer that return at the place of his past crime. The same emotion. I don't have plans of future with ATRAX MORGUE because I don't have plans or future with Marco Corbelli. I go to drift. I don't like programmed things. I like to live my life(if I can call it "life") at random. I don't have "daily" for a long time. With ATRAX MORGUE I'm express honestly a reflection of myself. More times I don;t like to compose tracks and to play. It's not funny for me. I find it very suffering. And it's part of the negation of ATRAX MORGUE. Do nothing.

ATRAX MORGUE/SLAUGHTER PROD.- c/o Marc Corbelli. via Tartini, 8- 41049 Sassuolo (MO) Italy

I am nothing and all. I want to research the nothing the very emptiness. Maybe in the past I was an artist. But now I'm not a fucking artist. I don't want any longer to be me. I'm fucking about me. I'm feeling more near the inorganic... Go beyond yourself and find the point of no return. You will see things around you in a very different way.



Opeth

With the second album, 'Morningrise', growing old and a third one under construction, I sat down with Micke for a small talk, a little about this and a little about that. And a lot about 'Morningrise'.

I think the first album is better than this second one.
Well. It is a matter of taste, of course. Many think so but many also think the opposite. As for myself, I can't say which one I prefer. I want our records to hold the same quality, I wouldn't want to be able to say which one is the best, all of them should be as good. Now when we have recorded 'Morningrise' and listen to it, it naturally ends up more interesting to listen to, it's new... But when one has learned the songs properly, then it becomes another thing. Then one can listen to both records, despite the age. People have said a lot of different things about the records. The debut was so damn popular just because it was a debut, and if you release a good debut you usually get a less enthusiastic response for the second album. It doesn't have to be worse but if you do a good debut there is so much you'll have to live up to. Nothing can really tell if it is better or worse, it's just a matter of taste. Then again, people will surely praise our third album, sort of... hehe. No, we'll have to see what happens.

I found it most interesting that you said 'To Bid You Farewell' is the song people seem to like most. That women would think so would be no surprise, but you'd expect it to get slashed to pieces in this man's world that the scene is!
Yes, I was actually shocked. We had counted on it that people would more or less hate it, just because there are many who think we are black metal or whatever... It was just a song we did that turned out very calm. It feels stupid to limit ourselves to only play brutal, we like so much other music. We have a lot of calm passages in the other songs, but here it got more calm than brutal. But it doesn't matter because we like the song a lot and we didn't care if people would hate it or not, but apparently they didn't. It was definitely the most noted song although we had another one on the same album that was 20 minutes! Lee of Candlelight got so good response on 'To Bid You Farewell' that he once suggested us to record a double album next time - a calm record and a harder one. It won't happen this time, though.

I have always liked your calm passages but thanks to the last lines in this very song I found it all to end up just too cheesy, like some typical mainstream pop lyric or whatever...
Sure you can interpret it as the worst kind of pop lyric, but actually for me it is more or less about love... not too hard to understand, but the rest of the record is about sorrow. It feels stupid to judge the entire song just because of two lines but never mind. It was just a lyric that I wrote and liked. The other songs are more or less about sorrow in connection with death, but this one just came out different. I'm not ashamed about that lyric.

Of course not, and obviously you are the only one who has the authority to criticise your own lyrics. Still, a friend of mine said a thing once that I found rather amusing. We were talking about some band's lyrics but he said he didn't want to comment them too closely because 'lyrics are so personal' - but isn't the music just as personal? This means we, who do not belong to the band, cannot say a thing, neither about the lyrics nor about the music!
Yes, but reviews are a kind of 'necessary pain in the ass' somehow. If I get a really bad review without any kind of intelligence - if they only say it is 'boring' and nothing happens in general - then it almost sounds as if he hasn't listened to the record at all because there sure are things happening all of the time... Then I get pissed off and think 'What an idiot'. But I think it's fun with reviews anyway, that's the only way you really see what people think about the music. It's not that many people who come up to me on the pub and then talk half an hour about the record, they just say 'It's damn good'.
That people dare to criticise the music but not the lyrics, that's because lyrics are on paper, you can read it, it's like a person... while the music just 'is there'. There are hardly many people that sit and think 'Now he's been crying when he did that riff', haha. Not that it would be so either, for that sake... I myself don't write that personal lyrics, except for sometimes. I try to mix it up. I try to constantly write about somebody else despite using the words 'me' and 'I' in the lyrics.

So, have you received this Intelligent Totally Negative Review yet, that you have been waiting for for a good while now?
Well... no, I haven't seen it. A really thorough bad review. Most of those who complain just mention the long songs and things like that. If it was a magazine that you have respect for, somebody who knows music, it would be interesting... it is sort of meaningless to sit and discuss music with somebody who just sits and plays computer games.

Like that 'Top of the Pops' label you got when 'Orchid' was released...
'Top of the Pops', yes, but I have thought about it and now I find it quite amusing! This sort of grind guy, it is quite obvious he wouldn't like it...

Well, I like some good grind too. But it is very interesting to get constructive criticism, it is the same thing with my zine - most comments you get are not that detailed. But then you hear from somebody who also points out the bad things and that gives a lot more credibility to his positive comments too.
Yeah, but if it had been some little kid who sat and wrote on his mum's typewriter saying you couldn't write, then you would probably have thought 'What sort of idiot is this'.

Ah, I think I would have just have found it comical. Anyway, in conclusion we can however say that only receiving good reviews wouldn't be that healthy either...
No, I don't think so.

Enough about reviews. How about this piano song that was supposed to be on 'Morningrise'? You were quite enthusiastic about it.
Yes, it was actually half recorded but we had so little time left. We were there one month and thought we'd make it, definitely, but we really didn't... We started

recording it the last or second last day before the mixing. Anders knew the song well but the keys are so narrow on a keyboard while he was used to a piano. He tried to do it for a long time but everybody were so tired that he finally said 'Ah fuck this'. Dan was also of the opinion that it would in a way be like a reprise from the debut. It was a great song and we still have it in our heads, so it might turn up in the future. It was a little sad that it wasn't featured because I like it a lot but at the same time it feels good we didn't - it would have felt so predictable.

But what the hell did you do that whole month in the studio, then?
It all took a lot of time because we did everything so properly this time. We tried not to repeat the mistakes from the debut, such as tempo increases. Perhaps people don't hear it but it is very disturbing if you sit and think about it. I hear all the mistakes from the debut, and from the second album as well, it is not faultless either. But on this one we used click-track. But it was a rather extensive process before we started recording, programming this click took ages.

Not that I'd be a musician or anything, but personally I think that if one is perfectionistic enough to use click-track, then it is not about music anymore... then it verges on mechanics. But then I know I am old-fashioned.
Yes, I know what you mean but here all the material was ready when we went to the studio. It's so easy to speed it up. You can do that live, but it really sounds crap.

...in your ears...
Yes, at least in my ears, I can't take it. But with this click-track, we didn't have to bother. We have so many stops and changes that we almost have to use click-track. There is no chance to do everything live at Dan's studio. I don't think it's fake but more like a small help that most serious musicians use sometimes. Especially if you play such music as us with 20 minute songs, then you'd rather not notice something got wrong after ten minutes... having to do it all over again.
And it's pretty hard to hear, you get pretty deaf of the music if you spend as long as one month at the studio, so you have to rely on this kind of technical things, unfortunately.

By the way, another thing I don't quite like on 'To Bid You Farewell' is the Bob Dylan voice!
Actually we wanted to have a hollow voice, like on 'Planet Caravan' by BLACK SABBATH. We found it but it didn't quite sound right. The voice we have now is a bit like on 'No Quarters' by LED ZEPPELIN. I like it because it gives a sort of close feeling, I think... Just because it is quite dry, almost like on a telephone. Not that it would be about telephones, not quite, but we just wanted to have a different feeling there.

And the length never ended up on 66 minutes and 6 seconds as it was supposed to be! Explain yourself!
Mmh, it was so from the beginning, actually. When we printed the first press on CD-R after having mastered the record, it was exactly 66.06. Then, later, all the material arrived to England and Lee called me up one day saying five seconds were missing in the middle of a song. We were like, 'What?!' There had been something wrong with the mastering so some seconds were actually missing. So they had to re-master it and then it got 66.07 instead. It's so typical, it never ends up the way you want it. Now this was not a very important thing, it was more like a fun thing that we accidentally noticed and asked Dan to add a few seconds to get it there...

And the MORBID ANGEL shows in England last summer (1996 that is), how were they?
Well, they were fun. It was a kind of kick to play with them, as they used to be my favourite band once... But it turned out that they were damn hard to get along with, it was all one circus... They were very arrogant, to start with, they hardly said hi. They were recording some live record so they soundchecked for ages and that caused a lot of trouble. At one occasion neither we nor THE BLOOD DIVINE could play because MORBID ANGEL soundchecked from three in the afternoon until eight when the doors opened. I suppose they expect us to think it's so cool to play with MORBID ANGEL that we'll accept everything, but that's not the case really. It's not cool at all to play with MORBID ANGEL if we sound shit... But it was fun, good shows and it was a lot of people. They are one... if not the greatest death metal band in the world. Or were, perhaps. So definitely, we reached a goal there.

Your next goal is to get them open for you...
Yes, kind of! Apart from minor technical problems it was good, and the last show, at Astoria in London, was the best one we have ever done. Everything was perfect. In fact, we sold more shirts and merchandise than MORBID ANGEL on the shows in general, it's a good sign! It was fun.

Now to something different. Where are your V-jeans?
I wear them sometimes, actually. On special occasions... I used to wear them almost all of the time. Now it sounds like bragging but when I had them, it was quite unusual. Now it's the in thing, or perhaps it is starting to get out again... Well, I don't know. I still like that style they had on the 60's and 70's but I don't like to look like some typical neo-hippie.

Have they printed 'Orchid' on a black disc yet?
I don't know, I don't think so. I can't bother about it anymore. The entire record was completely wrong layout-wise. The only things I like are the front and back covers, the rest is a catastrophe. The booklet was printed in negative, a blue fucking disc... but you can't say it's not original! But I'm not so sure if I think it looks that good... I told them to print them black next time and fix all the mistakes but I don't know if they have done it. It doesn't matter anymore.

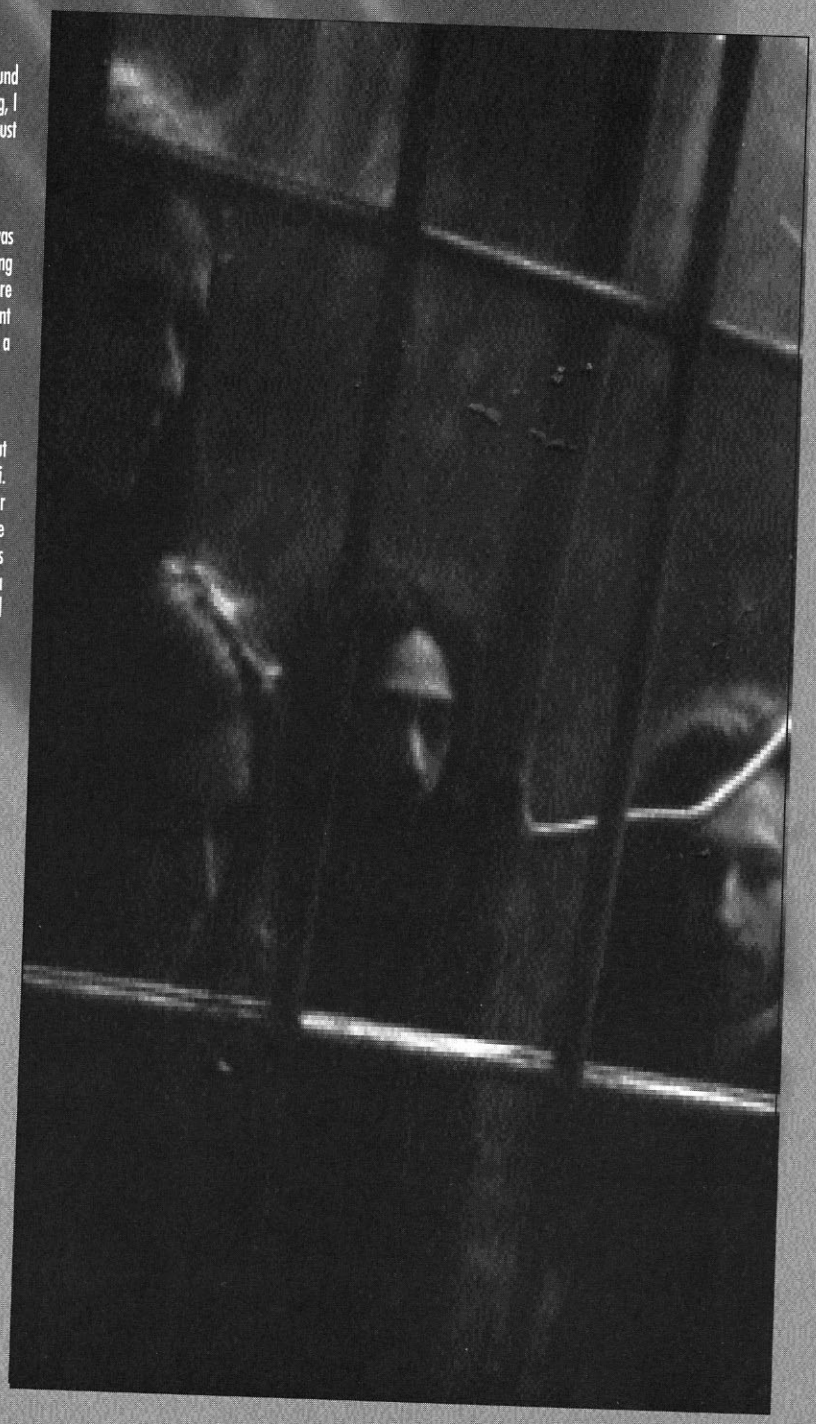
It is worse with labels like the Greek Unisound. On several records I know they have completely ignored the studio, the band members, the address to the band... On THE EQUINOX OV THE GODS' debut the only thing that reads are the lyrics and the address to Unisound!
Haha, no, that sort of label that really seems to be a crap one, shouldn't ignore the band's opinion. With Candlelight we demand to take care of all that ourselves. The only thing he can say anything about is what he wants to have on the record, like the label logo, address, distributors. We take care of the rest. OK, then the bill he got from the layout company was a fat one so it's possible he won't allow us to do the layout next time, haha. But that's the thing that's so great with Candlelight, we have complete freedom to do whatever we want to. I talked to Century Media yesterday and they are very interested in us, but I think they would try to change us a lot to fit their plans. *(CM has now released both OPETH albums in the US.-Stephen)*

Yes, they have styled MOONSPELL quite a bit... it is like a completely different band today, unfortunately. Now, is there something special you want to talk about?
I can't answer to that kind of questions, it's impossible. When you have to pose questions to yourself, it gets like 'Yeah but you can always ask about...', haha.

Let's talk about the new material, then.
We have done one song and started doing a second one *(far more by nowish of course, but DESCENT ain't no newspoper now is it?-Stephen)*. And then I have written almost all lyrics, in Swedish. I won't sing them in Swedish but I wrote them in Swedish to get them right, then I will translate them. It will be a concept album. I have worked a lot on the lyrics... When you write it's so easy to fall into that sort of poetic bollocks, but I want to write a little bit easier. We'll see. I'm going to a fair in Gothenburg and then I will meet Andy La Rocque, the King Diamond guitarist. He has opened a studio called Los Angered. Now that Unisound Studio is no more, we are looking for a studio and will see about Andy La Rocque's. I have talked to Dan if he wants to produce us at another studio and he actually said he was interested. Our next album will perhaps get a really thorough production.

A really clean one?
No, not clinically clean like DREAM THEATRE, but I mean that it will be a well planned record. I mean, if I know that I do a mistake on a record and you can't hear it, then I don't care. I am a perfectionist with the stuff that comes out of the loudspeakers, the stuff that people hear. Or I hear. But we'll see what happens with the next record, it will be released on Candlelight anyway.

-Timo. Ketola



sshe retin

SIGILLUM S should be a name familiar with most all of the obsessed electronic underground follower. Their history spans across the past several years with a slew of releases to their name. Psycho-sexual noise and textural manipulations may describe some of their more well known movements. Overall, their contribution to european noise is immense yet their name still conotates a true underground ring. We had the pleasure of speaking with mr. Paulo Bandera one third of this italian act about the situations with this project as well as his own SSHE RETINA STIMULANTS, an experiment which only stretches the mental and expressive barriers of noise and experimental sound beyond the limits conceptually and audially. Feel...

Tell us about the creation of SSHE RETINA STIMULANTS and the position of this project in comparison to SIGILLUM S?

My activities as SRS are just one of many natural expansions, after more then one decade of SIGILLUM S partnership with Eraldo Bernocchi. In fact, approx. In 1993, the need for additional emotional and methodological diversification in our approach started to materialize, flowing out of our delicate taste for perversions and mutations.... Rather than keeping all of our creative juices under the SIGILLUM S label or circling in the well defined environment of collaborations with friends (I.e. THE SODALITY, IUGULA-THOR, etc), we pushed ourselves into the unknown territories of individual responsibility... Eraldo with the early ASHES incarnations, myself with SSHE RETINA STIMULANTS gradually found also separate expressive ways, which (of course) may seem prone to isolate and enhance aspects which used to (only) coexist and merge in SIGILLUM S. This may certainly be true from an aesthetic point of view, with ashes being quite atmospheric and emotional, filled of eerie soundscapes and pulsing beats, while SSHE RETINA STIMULANTS is busy sharpening all the edges of extreme noises and concepts, hinting at raw, infected and devastated territories: at the same time, we have kept our relationship growing, and, while the two of us have built even complex expressive identities (with also other names / projects / collaborations taking shape and becoming public), at the same time, SIGILLUM S has kept shooting out live appearances and producing new recordings.

From where the name SSHE RETINA STIMULANTS derive ?

The SRS name was originally conceived as an alter ego for video activities in the SIGILLUM S framework, meaning video backgrounds for the live manifestations and the two video tapes releases by Minus Habens, that is order of the gash: Hyperlive (a video documentation of some of our 87-88 concerts, enhanced by screen manipulations by Eraldo and myself) and autosymbolistick configurations (a nine parts audio-visual representation of three subject specifically close the SIGILLUM S at the beginning of the 90s, that is voodoo, nepal and deep space). The SSHE acronym stands for super sound high energy which, when linked to RETINA STIMULANTS is intended to conjure a subliminal reference to sensorial synesthesia, with hyperintense noise causing total hallucinations... And this happened to be the path I wanted to explore more with an individual, optic - oriented venture, so SRS just became my logo of choice for new, top priority, sonic-eye adventures.

Can you tell us a bit more about the significance of incorporating a visual element into your work and your desired final outcome of doing so ?

The original seeds have always been there, since the SIGILLUM S conception: I was referring to how SRS just grew out of the audio-visual interplay of the live actions and the video tapes and this is where you probably must look to track back all the proper significance and contents. In fact, it all goes down into the subconscious arena, where no real distinction exists among neural signals and cognitive dynamics, where pulses and concepts become a fluid stage for matter to be born out of energy: rather than adopting standardized formulas, SIGILLUM S started with an immersion into the hidden tanks of this energy and came back with odd beasts of unclear origin, noisy entities with a twisted brain, a huge sensual drive and the tendency to consider themselves actors in an endless altered - TV series. Right there its where I have always wanted to place my projects, thinking about myself more as a conceptual sound producer or (better) a noise-movie director than anything else. From an operative stand point, the power and subtleties of the screen show have always attracted and inspired me, providing formal basis for a different kind of sound making, where the subject is usually well defined and the noise script is conceived as an integrated unity of instrumental choice and a-tonal derangement: the intended effect is a mixture of subjective representation of ideas and descriptive process of sensorial output, relying on a shifting platform of events and effects to generate a truly multi - position shape. SIGILLUM S has always used visual productions and/or manipulations to give full dignity to the live representations where, each time, we have depicted and analyzed, via a crossed-over impact of spontaneous assault and scripted structures, specific themes: the video creations have been extensively used to draw and embrace the audience into our acoustic phenomena and then suck them further into the emotional and cerebral pits where we dwell. The SRS stage performance is, in fact, quite a good example of this approach, relying heavily on video interaction / stimulation, both via large screen and monitors: images and tools become the real focus of the SRS presentation, with the audience drawn into a cathode / liquid crystal environment and with actual physical presence as an option.

SIGILLUM S, it seemed, began with a more aggressive/violent themeology and has gradually moved away from that, although keeping the meditative qualities. Can you speak a bit about the early stages of SIGILLUM S and your collaborators from that period? How can you compare that era to what you are doing presently ?

I have always considered our early SIGILLUM S works as a kind of programmatic manifesto, a series of declaration of intents via audio/text/images: this is specifically true for boudoir philosophy, our first LP, where the seeds were planted for further spirals & lines to evolve. Shock and provoke were there the passwords of choice, used to explore consciousness levels and perception gates, trying to educate ourselves and initiate an interacting audience. From a formal standpoint, lower (but not less effective) tech used to be employed to cruise across conventions and subliminal terrain: rough electronics, anguished vocalism and concrete sounds all merged into a harsh structure, relying more on improvisation than on careful craft, but already very firmly based on dense and complex conceptualism. This has been of course (and it still is) learning process, providing mainly definition of patterns guidelines: Through the years, the exploration of hidden dynamics and forbidden areas has touched different ways of maximizing our (and the audiences) existential potential, gathering more and more tools (instruments, techniques) as well as involving a certain number of changing, external contributors. SIGILLUM S is the interactive relationship between Eraldo and myself: at the same time, part of the original core of activities (specifically for pure musical input) was also Luca Di Giorgio, whose participation has been coming and going through the years (meaning he has taken part, roughly in 2/3 of the recorded material / concerts), even if always having more an emotional undertone, rather than a conceptual one. Besides Lucas involvement, we have always had the tendency to entangle personal friends (including also those to whose projects we also often reciprocally contribute, I.e. IUGULA-THOR, THE SODALITY, etc.) as well as people from other projects (which has then also, in some case, become personal friends) such as f:a.r. here in Italy or Mark Solotroff *(INTRINSIC ACTION/BLOODYMINDED-Stephen)* from the US. This has resulted in various examples of very positive collaboration,

a stimulants

either on stage or on record (or both), which have pursued (probably) at a higher level our ideals of complexity and extreme enhancement. What we have started more than 10 years ago is practically still there: same attitude and same targets... The differences are, of course, in maturity, better / changing instruments and (of course) our desire to avoid repetition !

You have been quite prolific over the years under the name SIGILLUM S. Which of these can you choose as the more accurate definition of what SIGILLUM S really is ? What can you tell me about upcoming releases under that moniker ? It is interesting that you are working with Mick Harris and also E. Bernocchi is working with Bill Laswell on a number of projects... can you please elaborate ?

By going through the SIGILLUM S collection, I may, of course, highlight the titles which probably represent (with a good approximation) the best definition of SIGILLUM S at a certain stage, but...The key issue is the perpetual drive for evolution and you must always remember that this means as many SIGILLUM S faces as you can count.Any way, trying to summarize, I see as first phase peaks (or, better, turning points), after the manifesto-like revelation of 'Boudoir Philosophy', the fragmented (23 tracks) acoustic / cerebral pathology of 'Hallucinated Moisture', the physical exploration of social mutations of 'Dispersion' and the sexoterick machinery of 'Cybertantrick'. After this path (and via various live appearances), we cross a gate: this is 'Helix Parasites', where all the various forms and subjects coalesce in this large and challenging test of bio-sonic engineering... There we tried (and I think we succeeded) to cross all previous borders and fuse structures with free - form hyper density, silences with sudden impacts... All through the magnifying lenses of a re-united 3 members line -up. Following this high value added moment, the SIGILLUM S story has indeed taken an odd twist, with documentary releases (such as 'Live Assault') or reissues (the first 2 parts of the 'Malattia' box set), filling the gaps while a series of contractual mishandling and misfortunes were really jeopardizing our market presence: meanwhile, recording has kept going and we now (april 1997) have reached the strange (or maybe its the usual) position of being ready to flood audiences with a bunch of new releases in different formats and through various labels. First, of all, we have (finally) the 3rd CD for the 'Malattia' boxed project, that is 'Epidemiology', a one - off attempt to reprocess archive (previously unreleased) tapes into soundtracks for disease states: moods are morbid and sounds infect rather than cut, going for a side walk.... In parallel, a CD single, 'Sociopath', features 2 brand new, aggressive and rhythmic, excursions into electronic commentaries, together with three additional reworking (2 of a relic from our past, 1 from the new tracks)... Then 'S/M-tek Shi' is, finally, the real new SIGILLUM S album, bringing in a quite diverse step forward with the participation of Mick Harris on drums, adding a very jazzy and spacious feel to the seven tracks which have evolved from a two year testing on stage... The climates of the records are even more diversified than our previous works, pulling out heavy sampling of our voices with quiet notes suddenly exploding into dense beats and shreaking strings and so on. Micks presence on 'S/M-tek Shi' is, of course, just another sign of how our (both as SIGILLUM S and with the other projects) collaborative approach is continuously evolving and leading into contacts with musicians which happen to be interested in what we have done/do, get in touch or be contacted, up to the level of being willing to share a number of future targets, as well as becoming friends and, generally speaking, partners. Quite interestingly (and, maybe, naturally) this really seems to produce an international network of possibilities, contributing to more and more interpretations and formats of our intentions and ambitions. A very visible example of this phenomenon is, of course, Eraldos collaboration with Bill Laswell, which has already generated a number of releases, involving contributions as various as tibetan monks, Reeno (the singer from italian dub band ALMAMEGRETTA) and Mick again.... From a very different perspective, this applies as well to the many SRS (or other names) works in which I have asked for input from friends.

SIGILLUM S has been synonymous in my mind with extravagant song titles and I see this also applies to SRS. How does this characterize your work ?

I agree, this has always been a kind of expressive trade mark.. And a purposefully chosen too! The use of extravagant song titles is, in fact, an attempt to perform also at language level, trying to access the key codes of the cognitive processes: its words as sounds and symbols, crossing semantics with games and mutant colours. This is enhanced by our attitude about playing with another language which is not one mother tongue, trying to master it and, as unavoidable side effect, change it into a cultural accident....That is, most of our titles (and all of our cover texts) employ english as obvious international communication tool, but we love choosing words with alien overtones and creating neologisms, mixing contexts and scenarios by creating puns and drawing mental images, synchronizing sound, images and sentences. As this evolves, I have more and more the sensation of having my hands full of a gel-like mess of neo-english references.... By rubbing our faces with it and then kissing the audience, we get excited and odd acoustics get out more easily and freely !

The juxtaposition of sexual euphemisms, medical accoutrements and scientific jargon blend to create a unique approach. How can you see all this as being reconciled into one manifestation ?

Quite naturally for me, these are really all sides of what I define as a genetically engineered sensibility, that is a programmed approach to an altered way of perceiving reality: I have chosen to modify perception in order to experience everything as a flowing blend of opportunities and options, where matter and energy turn into each other and sensuality pushes buttons made of unknown materials. This selective option has been pursued for years and years through personal training and exercise, connecting academic education with artistic practice and techniques of self - exploration: formulas have been developed and swapped, filtering ego and relationships through a subjective kingdom of fetishes and obsessions, until dogmas and prejudices fade away in a blurred fog of dead paranoia and liquefied tools. Or, more plainly, my personal background as researcher and scientist has always been applied also to the creative field, driving my expressive operations into rooms full of implants and sexually charged machinery, craving for satisfaction where others get puzzled, buried into the inflamed regions where bruises heal around metals and plastics. My ballardian excursions into contemporary imagination and sexual hypothesis leave me drooling into recorded discs as well as pc screens, engaging audio dynamics into ethereal copulation.

With SRS you move into a more conceptual and extreme wing, which you describe as ...Pushing synergy where nothing has ever gone before.... Can you elaborate about these ?

Expanding further the oceanic concept of unlimited detachment of sensual realization from conservative bodies, I have been targeting the conception of autonomous entities out of audio-visual interventions, jumping into the possibility of considering them as subjective media / machinery for sensorial evolution. This has lead to high density constructs, where ideas, functions and conversation combine and crash: Senses become proper focus for iterations among sound waves and photons, leading nerve activities beyond their original settings and into a warped, crossbred playground. Out of the boiling forks of memory and experience, post-nature metaphysics of noise rise and proliferate.

On your 'Some Whore and a Camera Zaibatsu' release you collaborate with many composers on the concept of voyeurism and related topics. The massive variation in sound from track to track is an entrancing one. Can you explain the construction of this project and your opinion of the final results ?

I tend to think that some whore... Is probably the best product so far out of the SRS series of joint ventures: as you pointed out, its target was the representation/analysis of the concepts/dynamics of voyeurism and in order to achieve the most complete and diversified presentation, I involved a number of close friends and collaborators (Mark Solotroff, Andrea Cernotto, Andrea Chiaravalli, Akifumi Nakajima/AUBE, Stefan Alt/Ant Zen - NIMOY, Koji Tano/MSBR). Every invitee reacted in his own way to my textual stimulus, supplying by mail either sounds/noises or texts or images: the audio contribution were then merged into my own noise constructions, built on purpose as reactions and mixed in real time in a single session at verba corrige studio (with Eraldo as assistant technician). At the same time, text and images were integrated into a lay out by Rodolfo Protti (Old Europa Cafe), with additional images by RLL: this mixed methodology, overlaying well programmed, remote interactions with a spontaneous assemblage, has caused for me the capture in sound & vision of the precious perfume of shadows and distortion as emitted by multiple, sensual coupling under a scrutinizing eye... dissected and re-processed, sensibilities have produced sonic sweat and droning films, a rare form of mediatic meta-communication.

Your work goes beyond that of music and sound. Please tell us about the other medium employed and the effectiveness of these avenues.

Audio & visual... Globally integrating themselves into a total art for fluid brain zones, one of the consequences is the introduction of installations as preferred material manifestation. Adopting video presentation as focus for SRS performances, a mesh of acoustic lines connect pixels and notes, forcing each other in and out of my body interface: this is truly the ultimate goal, a multi layered global representation, with physical action surfing on noise overload & screen activities. One of my pet definition for SRS is total media science fiction for mind & body.... Just to give a bit more breath and challenge to my general offer, I am currently evaluating a series of proposals and options which would lead me to pursue at a larger extent the use of essays and assorted journalism. At some point in the past, I have written for a few Italian magazines on some subjects... From music to fringe science and beyond: this is likely to be soon back in a more extensive fashion and plans are being finalized now with an italian publisher for contributions of mine to a number of projects (books, etc.).

What conclusions have you drawn with respect to sound being used to affect and effect the mind and body ?

The opportunities coming from contemporary technology in the area of sound generation, treatment, reproduction, transmission and analysis have opened up a huge gate for testing and probing the hidden heart of the acoustic domain: it is my pleasure and passion to dig deeper and deeper into this area and the more I travel into the field, the more I detect signs of interesting patterns. If you want to try and cross-reference from art to science to sociology, there are clear possibilities in the actual electronic age for mutant sensibilities to appear and grow as an education for the new millennium: information overload and the rise of the ever present digital formats seem to cry for the body to get ready and evolve... this needs appropriate treatments and an excellent option can be provided by piercing-high frequencies and mega-woofer basses as common in most of today's public playback conditions (and in most of the personal situation as well). By their intrinsic nature, these waves imply playing with flesh and physiological mechanism, affecting neural functions and modifying tissues and inner chemicals: well controlled and designed studies have been performed and results have been easily shown and studied. On one hand, damage at ordeal level is there, both at mechanical and perceptive level... On the other hand, this can be seen as a purification practice directing attention towards a stronger, improved immersion into a shining flow of quicker and denser sensations, where new signal to noise ratios are needed. Maybe, when the first whole digitalized life generations are grown enough and large scale studies are implemented.... Time will tell. Meanwhile, I think we are probably already doing our best to accelerate this kind of change, but get ready for much more !

Sshe Retina Stimulants:
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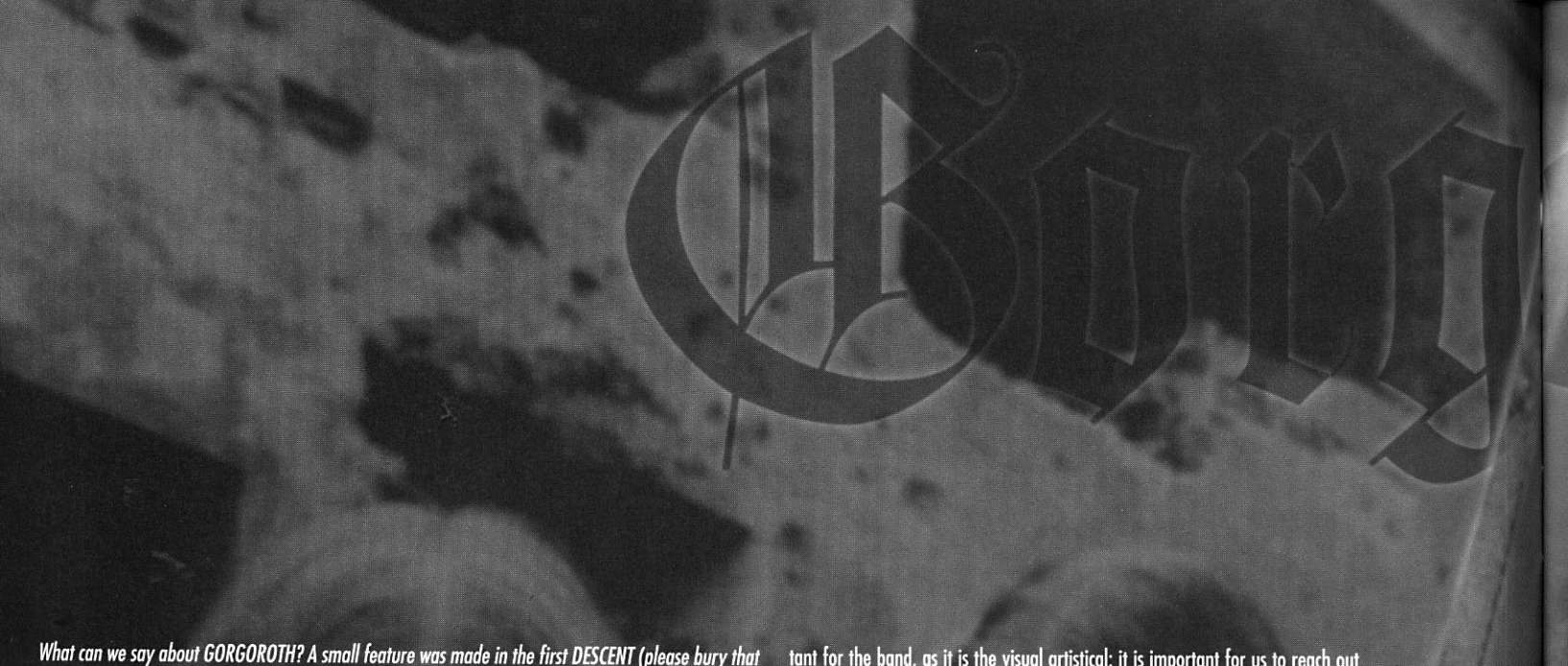

What can we say about GORGOROTH? A small feature was made in the first DESCENT (please bury that issue)... but only now we have the pleasure of speaking with the band's leader, Infernus. GORGOROTH pretty much epitomize what a black metal band should be cold, furious, cold, and even more cold... with all the trappings. The last release, "Antichrist" is a jewel of Black Metal if we've ever heard one. If there were a university of Black Metal, this band would be the Deans. The third GORGOROTH album should be out quite soon as well... we anticipate it immensely! Infernus steps from the shadows and speaks about the degrees...

I've read in a past interview that your lyrics would be solely in Norwegian, but 'Antichrist' has lyrics in English. Why the change?
One day I saw the connection between the fact that most big bands write in English! Since my only goal here in life is to become a "Rock Star"...

GORGOROTH has been known for collaborations with several notorious musicians(Samoth, Frost, etc). How do you feel looking back at previous members of the band and their contributions? Is the current line up the final one?
Yes, we've been helped by many skillful musicians/comrades. Naturally this had meant a lot to us. To you whom it concerns: Thanx. But, as of today we've a steady line up. It has been like this for about one year, with the exception that we've just recently acquired a second guitarist... the line up 1997: Pest (vox), Ares (bass), Vrolok (drums), Tormentor (guitars), and Infernus (guitars).

From our point of view GORGOROTH seems to epitomize the Anti-christian/Satanic terrorist core of 90's black metal. Is this purely philosophy or does it involve activism on your part? Without incriminating yourself please expand about the ideologies you are portraying and their importance?
On this point I'll speak on behalf of myself exclusively; artistically GORGOROTH represents my views upon certain matters such as the human race, religion, philosophy...
There will also be, to a certain degree, a part of it which will be hard to explain logical-rationalistically through words which make sense. Our outfit/stage shows for example: psychodramatic acts to, like the Laveyan rituals, stimulate the moods of the individual. It seems to me that this, combined with the lyrical and musical messages work very strong together.
I don't like to be in jail. By doing criminal acts there will also be a chance that I will get punished. I understand that the best for me is to reduce this chance as much as possible, of course. I must admit that this now and then gives me much to think about. With my moral I often feel like a wild animal trapped in a cage. The cage being a symbol of the anti-human judeochristianized society and it's laws... in which I live in. And freedom and responsibility the names of the animal.
Talking of Ideology... maybe I should write it's exoteric sides down once and for all (!!!) and publish it... anyway, I so far haven't, it would be unjust to do so, but rather ask the reader to continue digging himself into our albums to search those answers which are within, to a certain degree.

The visual side of GORGOROTH also epitomizes the core of 90's black metal, both in presentation of your albums and also the members aesthetic appearance. Will this always be crucial for GORGOROTH? Will corpse paint be an integral component to GORGOROTH's identity?
Thank you, your words are like sweet music to my ears. But, who am I to talk about always and forever? As one might understand we are constantly changing to uncertain degrees. Corpsepaint is, but is not of too much importance to GORGOROTH. At the moment we don't feel for a show without... no...

You have also undergone a few tours. What does a GORGOROTH performance entail? How important are live appearances for the band(since many BM bands avoid live shows)? How do the masses react at your gigs?
We did one half tour together with SATYRICON and DISSECTION. Live shows are in many ways important for the band, as it is the visual artistical: it is important for us to reach out to as many people as possible and it is actually quite satisfying doing gigs now and then. But to do shows one must rehearse a lot which is quite boring.
I think it's mostly this general feeling of reaching a satisfactory level on the creative artistical (of which 100% should represent the ideological/moral) side plus the immense adrenaline rush which sometimes assaults me...
The performances generally leave us more or less satisfied with the audience.

Frost is known a bit for his blood letting and scarification tendencies. Does GORGOROTH hold these practices dear? How about other traditional Black Metal activities- fire breathing, church burning, arson, assaults...?
There has been acts of self inflicted wounding of GORGOROTH members. I can't really see why I should let this area be part of our exoterical.
What else can I say in big letters... the night when Ares and some comrades dealt a bit roughly with some other people at a metal pub in Bergen: we were sitting by a table, I was of course not drunk... a man spoke the most indecent words "Christus verus Luciferus", and grabs my neck. I am falling. Comrade number one is on the floor punching his nose extremely hard. Next Ares smashes his fist into the man's head... I'm free. The man and some of his friends receive many fucking punches in the mouth, nose, eye, etc, etc, etc.
Prison!

The BM scene on the west coast of Norway has produced several genre-defining acts such as ENSLAVED, IMMORTAL, BURZUM etc.Can you tell us about your thoughts on the west Norwegian BM scene in comparison to the others that exist worldwide, do you feel a sense of superiority? Tell us also about the meeting of BORKNAGAR.
Yes, it seems like things are happening here on the Norwegian west coast, doesn't it? I like all of the bands that you mentioned, great musical acts, and I more or less know all of the involved persons besides Vikernes. I used to hang around with ENSLAVED, as they now live in Bergen. About BORKNAGAR, I played bass on the first album. It was a good time together with people from ENSLAVED/ULVER/etc. But it is for my concern over by now. I can of course not keep my mouth shut more than that I MUST talk about this new Bergenshybrid called DESEKRATOR. Devastating!

What are your opinions about your heritage as a Norwegian? Is the pride there for you? Also, do you support more visible Satanic/occult organizations?How do you see yourself as a Satanist and what is Satan and Satanism to you?

Yes. Actually, about one half hour by boat from where I spent my first 20 years there was a minor battle almost exactly 1000 years ago. From the same place, the first man from Norway to Iceland departed. A Viking Earl owned the place 4km west from where I used to live. 1km east: a what we call in Norwegian "Hov". A place of sacrifice from the pre-christian era.
I'm fascinated by my forefathers views upon morality and religion and I'm proud to have it as my heritage. I also find it a bit fascinating read of what happened in Germany/Austria from about 1870, when List, Wagner and the like connected this to their work... I also find it to some degrees reflected in the works of Nietzche.
Organizations: It find it, shall we say relieving to read Lavey. He puts words to ideas that I already have, but which are maybe not so related to each other. He writes simple, but it's fair enough. Even though being so far out materialisticaly in his views, I support many of the same values which he represents.
I'm not a member of any Satanic or occult organization.
Here, we once again talk of this personal moral code/religion/philosophy thing. The answer is yes and the answer is no. Nowadays I'm thinking of questions like: to what degree can we say good and evil exist (Satanism compared to existential philosophy)? I'm afraid this will qualify to become interpreted as quasi-philosophical meaningless hypothetical speculations. Enough about that!

It seems at the moment that the black metal fads have metamorphed again into a more thrash approach. This time around everyone seems to be truly into what they are expressing. Will this validate this wave and do you predict that this repeating cycle will continue?
I see your point. Yes it probably will, to a certain degree. But I don't care what some other musicians do, what becomes of their business and so on. I guess I, you, and the readers would be completely unified in our views of whatever is said here?
What can I do but to guide you towards the light by letting you taste the fruits of (Fy, Faen!!!) DESEKRATOR, here with parts of "Take us to the Pub (in London":
I've been around
I've been up and down
I've been drinking beer
Here and over there
I have seen your face
For too many days
-Shut Up!!!

It's impressive to see a live 7" by a black metal band. Why the decision to do this and are you pleased with the results? Any plans for another live release or video? What are GORGOROTH's future plans?
"Why" is boring to know about. Yes, we are satisfied with the exception that the vinyl turned out to be nearly pink. Our future releases: The third album is being released now, the fourth is recorded and we write material for the fifth at the moment. A live album will be recorded at the next tour together with a video, and a video for "Under the Sign..."

To end this: Tord and Joffe are thanked on the "Antichrist" LP for "keeping the true Black Sabbath spirit alive", I admit I was a bit surprised to see that group mentioned on a GORGOROTH record. Tell em you thoughts about SABBATH, OZZY, and the paths they have followed since their debut in 1970?
I like BLACK SABBATH, the old stuff with Ozzy. I played together with Tord and Joffe for a few rehearsals doing SABBATH covers to satisfy ourselves. That's it. Instead of talking about my relationship to the SABBATHistory I realize it's now time for counting sheep. Thanks for the time.

darkstyle

Niko Sirkiä interviews mainman Weno of this trance inducing Finnish act.

I always liked DARKSTYLE beginning with the demo "Return To The Shadow" in 1993, after Weno once handed it to me in some hazy bar near the river Aura. There was something fascinating in the plain and simple way the songs had been arranged and in the primitive production where the distortion was nearly swallowing the melodies [that the wall of guitars and bass suggested]. Maybe it had something in common with my first acquaintance with BATHORY as a kid several years before... a diamond in the rough, or whatever that kept hiding and you still knew it was there.
I was convinced by the "Cold Charisma" tape (1995) that I was dealing with something uncompromising, something that reflected the magick of life long enthusiasm. Having received this cute girl Anna to DARKSTYLE (and not the band only, I figure out) strengthened the sound with delicate keyboard work, the picture became clearer. The second meeting brought the essence of DARKSTYLE closer to me, giving another perspective to view it from. The sound was still rough but advanced in the way the nuances became present. The repetition of distorted guitars gnawing on the simple riffs had improved in a way which made gentle movements fell like stone monuments in Sahara. The whispering voice was just like it had been and would be, the rhythm taken over by semi-authentic, yet cold sounding drum programming. The pride of doing one's own thing was evident, as was self-confidence in the chosen way.
Now, there is a bond between DARKSTYLE and myself, in the form of this zero-budget record label of mine (that would be Niko's SOME PLACE ELSE-Stephen). Their mini-album "Black Crystals" is due out very soon, and I couldn't feel better about it. For obvious reasons I feel a bit "disqualified" to be objective about this matter, highlighted by the fact this seems to remain the one and only piece of contributed to this magazine (well, the fact that it is printed here should say enough about our opinions on the matter... not that it does about EVERYTHING in this issue though, unfortunately-Stephen). Having said that, the purity is reclaimed. I hope.

Now, as the mini-album is just about to be released (on both MCD and on limited edition [200 copies]10 inch vinyl by the way-Stephen), how do you feel about it?
I'm very satisfied with the "Black Crystals" mini-album. The five tracks included make a strong whole. The sound and the atmosphere are exactly what I was searching for.

If you compare it with the early demos you've made previously how do you see the development of the music as the years have come by?
Well, the mood indeed has developed into something stronger and more impressive... and my overall vision of DARKSTYLE has become clearer. The songs are just as unassuming as before. Progression, when it comes to DARKSTYLE, is not defined as making more difficult music.

You mentioned the mood which I see as the primal element in your music. The meaning of music is obviously to transmit the particular atmosphere to the listener. How do you take the atmosphere yourself?
The feeling that I get when I listen to my music is cold, dark, hollow... yet vast. Melancholic... and perhaps piercing somehow. At times I feel strangely empty after listening to it.

Why did you come up with using such instruments and sounds as the "transmitter"? Can you think of achieving the same result some other way?
Hard to imaging. I cannot say why I came up with the particular combination of the instruments. I don't think it would be possible to achieve similar atmospheres with acoustic instruments for instance, for the music of DARKSTYLE is based on the certain ripping, tearing touch that is presented with the distortion in the guitar and bass sounds. Neither do I believe in the possibility of achieving the thing with bare synth. So, it seems that the particular atmosphere demands exactly the tools currently used.

DARKSTYLE is plain and simple, stripped down from everything unnecessary. Yet, the simplicity contains a unique kind of richness that makes it do the trick on the listener. So, it's like the necessity is given and all that is missing is unworthy, isn't it?
You hit the bull's eye here. But I'd like to add that the music has automatically formed itself the way it is. I didn't actually mean to make some exact kind of "simple music".

Could DARKSTYLE be considered as a representation of functionalism in music? We're pretty damn far from some rococo here...
Well, you could see it so. But functionalism as architecture (which the style first reminds me of) doesn't give the right picture of the music of DARKSTYLE, so it's pretty far away as well. We could also think of using constructivism as a description, but that's nearly as far too.

Do you like the art of Alvar Aalto (the famous Finnish functionalist of the early and mid twentieth century)?
In a way I like his architecture as it's quite simple, but the continuous use of square shapes annoys me. We shouldn't forget though he occasionally had it pretty "sharp" too. I prefer more jagged solutions though.

The lyrics give the impression of minimalism akin to the music. Which do you consider more important, the meanings of the words or their phonetics?
Both are very important. To me, whispering is an instrument and therefore has to work along with the others... but of course the meanings behind the words are more important. Because my lyrics are visions it is difficult to change or rewrite them afterwards without breaking down the atmosphere that has once been created.

Why always that whispering voice?
In my opinion whispering is closer to people's inner thoughts, the deepest feelings... if you compare it to singing, speaking or even screaming.

But as there are both genders present in DARKSTYLE, a wide range of different vocal styles could be used. Haven't you considered taking the advantage?
No. It's out of the question, even though Anna is a superb singer. Look at what I just said: think if there were "real" vocals among the whispers it would probably "sound good" *(err... what???-Stephen)* but then the "back to reality" effect would pop up, resulting in the flop of the atmosphere in the very case of DARKSTYLE.

Okay.
You have also said that Anna is a cellist, is it as much out of the question?
We have been playing with the idea of using cello in the future, but not necessarily in the traditional manner, but more as an effect of some sort.

Now you're talking!
Usually, when I hear the cello in some band's music, I'm fed up with it in less than half a minute. Even though Anna is very proficient after several years in orchestra, we will avoid the usual solution of using it in DARKSTYLE.

Is there more to tell about the post-"Black Crystals" material?
There is no new material finished as of yet, but we have ideas that will probably grow into new tracks during the next autumn or winter. No radical changes are to come when it comes to the structure of the music. We hope to add a bit of mystery of some kind which should add to the overall impression.

You've never been too eager to gather up additional musicians to join DARKSTYLE. It'll be a NO for any live performances unless you recruit appropriate machinery (I was thinking of an orchestra of 12 guitars and some 4 bass or so, with a traditional string section-Stephen)... which may turn less "live" as well...
As it seems now DARKSTYLE will be going on with just the two of us, so gigs are out of the question. We could physically play live with the help of some outsiders, but psychically it would be wrong because I think DARKSTYLE can only operate with permanent members to retain the feeling. We aren't using session members for recording or rehearsals either.

Obviously, it's twice as hard to even think of finding new permanent members... on the other hand, I don't think you play in any other bands or give friends a hand when it comes to playing music...?
Neither of us have other music related projects. I'm not interested in playing in other bands, not even for just a good time. I'd rather use my time and energy solely for DARKSTYLE. Besides, I want to keep DARKSTYLE away from the grey mass of bands. I cannot even think of a split release with some other band for instance. Also the fact that we are doing the recordings in our own Black Palace studio helps to keep the distance.

Now, what if DARKSTYLE was something to eat instead of something to listen to?
Something cold, fresh and pure... crushed ice cubes.

Whatever, DARKSTYLE should be taken as more than just music. It's someone's life coming out, by manners plain and rough, yet gentle and fascinating.

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Aeturnus

We here in the bog have followed this western Norwegian act for a few years now, through the release of their demo, MCD (on an obscure Czech label) and now their debut, the typically titled "Beyond The Wandering Moon" on Dutch Hammerheart. An effective blend of droning black and death metal, however, this band brings forth some new flavors in their approach. Mr. Bane interviewed band-leader Ares, whom lets us know a bit more about what's happening (albeit in a very superficial/surface/shallow way) with this great metal band.

Why is it that AETERNUS remains a fairly obscure entity within the confines of metal?
Well, as I see things nowadays, people are starting to get to know us. Not everywhere, of course, but I receive new letters every day from all over and the MCD we released in '95 is selling good now. Today I would not say that AETERNUS remains a fairly obscure entity within the confines of metal. Wherever we haven't reached out, we will now with our new full length entitled 'Beyond the Wandering Moon'.

A few words on each project and the AETERNUS progression.
The first release we did, or I did(AETERNUS was a one man band then), was a demo called 'Walk My Path' containing three tracks. I was not really sure of the music style, how I wanted it to be and so on. It sold around 300 copies before I stopped the sales. View Beyond got interested after 5-6 months after the release and offered a fair enough MCD deal which we went for right away because the new songs were so much better, etc., etc. Both these previous releases were done at Hindu-Lyd Studio (also used by ANCIENT and MOLESTED). The new CD was recorded at Grieghallen. The songs are much more dark and atmospheric and we have more "fast riffs" on some of the songs.

Tell us of the picture on the 'Dark Sorcery' CD.
It shows the plague or a plague born out of dark sorcery. It can also be looked upon as the birth of the real AETERNUS. I look upon the MCD as the real beginning of our journey towards eternity *(much more interesting cover art as well I'd say-Stephen).* Besides that, it's not very original, but good enough for that release and title in my opinion.

The second song on the MCD is "Victory". Of which victory do you speak?
"Victory" is about holding on to what we stand for, no matter what, nobody can stop us from marching towards the glorious eternity. At the end of the song I sing about "the gods who are with us". Those gods are us; we lead ourselves to victory. Nothing is above us as "gods" or anything. We walk our path together and we do as we please being our own king and master.

What is the translation of "Nordlys" and how does it pertain to the track?
"Nordlys" is Norwegian for arctic light. The music speaks of the dance of this light.

What philosophy(if any) lies behind your work?
My music and my belief that my soul is everlasting. Living in Norway and being a Norwegian surrounded by Norway's bold nature.

Are the lyrics important?
To me, they are very important. The lyrics has to concern something that has to do with my inner thoughts- dreams- desires and so on. I write the lyrics first and then compose the music while reading the lyrics over and over again.

What motivates and inspires you each day to continue this existence?
AETERNUS is my destiny. I live this life. Dedicated to my music, searching for eternity's realm.

Do you have nightmares often? Can you effectively work others' dreams? What is a nightmare to you?
Don't know, haven't tried. Nightmares? Well, not often, twice a year perhaps. It depends on what you choose to consider as a nightmare, right? Nightmare to me would definitely be not being able to play guitar anymore due to fingers being cut off or something like that.

Is it possible for a forest or nature to be "evil"?
Come again? Weird question *(not really-Stephen)*! Well, what is evil? To me, a forest is not evil. It's mighty and alive. To others is might be considered evil, but if so you must ask them why. Nature can be evil in my opinion. Not to me, but to others I believe mother nature has a soul and she takes lives if she pleases as well. To me that is only natural, not evil.

"Under The Blade Of The Dead" is by whom? How did you choose this piece to open your new CD?
We decided to open this CD with something different than the MCD which starts out with storm F/X and bells, wolf F/X... So me and Morrigan composed this little piano piece of majesty which we named 'Under The Blade Of The Dead'. This title was chosen basically because we found it suitable for/within this instrumental. Also, it goes extremely well with the hammering beginning of 'Sworn Revenge'.

Is the land of Norway the land you speak of in your songs?
Yes, all songs on this CD has it's own kind of relationship to Norway. Most definitely! One exception is the harp solo who truly belongs in the land of the Celts. I write a lot about Norwegian nature with it's winters and storms, etc. And it all comes very automatically as I look upon my land as majestic and entirely glorious!

Is your music the weapon of which you speak in "Sworn Revenge"?
In 'Sworn Revenge' I do not speak of a "weapon". This song is about a warrior of Norway who learns that his people has been slaughtered by Christians and he sets off to make the worms pay so he again can rise his people's banner high.

A favorite legend or myth?
Greek mythology... Ares, the mighty God of war. His mind and soul speaks of true darkness and brutalness. Imagine his existence in this world... oh, how much blood and gore he would provide Mother Earth with... *(err...-Stephen)*

Fantastic beasts and jolly deities still rule the minds of many from your region of the world. How does this account for the fear and respect for the land which it presents?
For those who are in a strong harmony with these beasts and jolly deities I would say it accounts strongly and deeply.

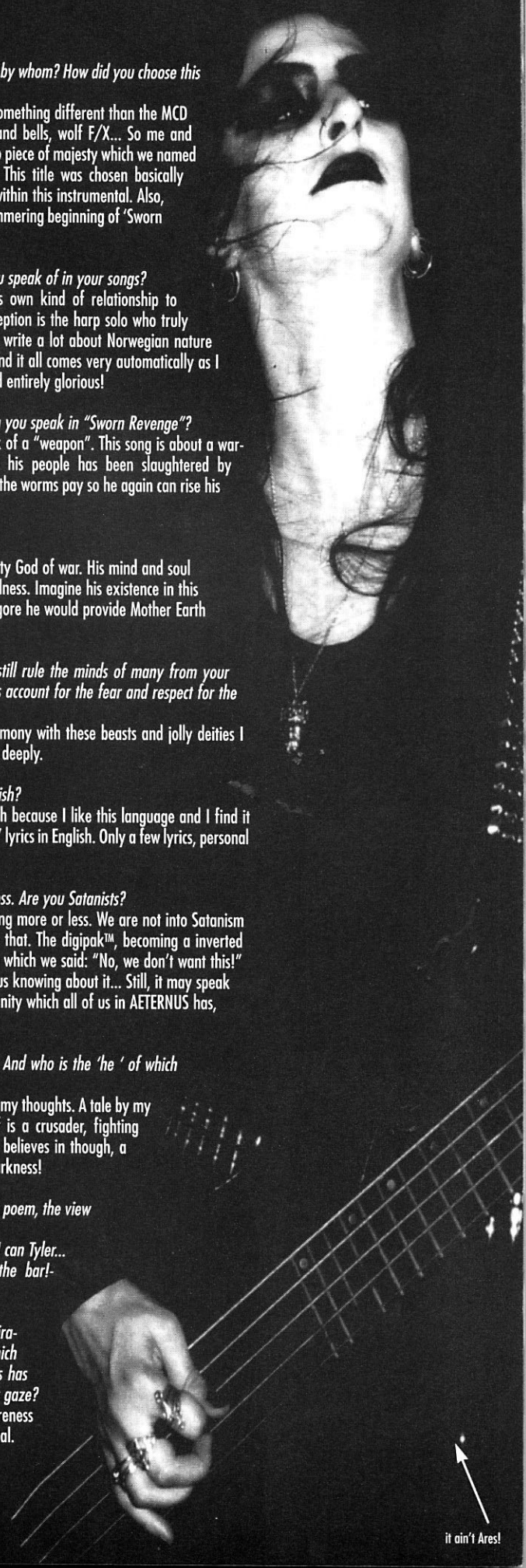
Why do you choose to sing in English?
I basically write my lyrics in English because I like this language and I find it suitable to write most of AETERNUS' lyrics in English. Only a few lyrics, personal ones, are Norwegian.

Your CD opens into an inverted cross. Are you Satanists?
AETERNUS plays dark metal, nothing more or less. We are not into Satanism or anything that can be related to that. The digipak™, becoming a inverted cross when folded out was an idea which we said: "No, we don't want this!" However, it was still done without us knowing about it... Still, it may speak of a strong hatred towards Christianity which all of us in AETERNUS has, deeply inside.

From where derives "Winter Tale" And who is the 'he ' of which you speak?
"Winter Tale" is a tale taken out of my thoughts. A tale by my own hand. the person I speak of is a crusader, fighting darkness and evil. Not the evil he believes in though, a more brutal source of evil, pure darkness!

Can you describe, in a spontaneous poem, the view from the place you most frequent.
Sorry, not possible for me at all! *(I can Tyler... Yar, yar, I'll see you down at the bar!-Stephen)*

Have you ever considered a conspiracy of souls, more than one soul which lies within each of us? What sights has yours seen and what yet awaits it's gaze?
My view on my soul, my own awareness of immortality and so on is personal. It's a deep subject I do not wish to discuss as it exists for me only. *(Yawn.... -Stephen)*



it ain't Ares!

Pazuzu

We've been trying to get this interview since we were obsessed with their debut CD on Metalion's HNF label a few years ago. PAZUZU created some very interesting dark sounds, with a really unique edge, at least we thought so. So, in 1997 'they' have released their second album 'Awaken the Dragon'... which honestly didn't have as much of an impact on us as the debut ('... and all was silent'), but it's refreshing nonetheless to talk with Mr. Pazuzu himself (aka Ray of Dark Matter Records). Tyler and I interrogated...

Your new album seems to be, essentially, a solo CD. Why or how did this transpire?

You're right 'Awaken the Dragon' finally turned out to be a solo album. This had several reasons, for one, Protector, who composed much of the first CD, is involved with many different darkwave projects, so he often lacks time. 2 years went by after the release of the debut. During this time PAZUZU was more or less put to rest, except for one track on the ABMS compilation, it became rather quiet around us. I wanted to get some distance from the first album, you know, let it sit a bit. I wanted to know what reactions would be like to this kind of music, which was unheard of in the Black Metal scene. After all, things turned out to be very well. PAZUZU's music was able to reach many open minded music fans. At that time I started to think about the second album. I figured it would take some time to compose everything, so I bought all the right equipment and started working on the new material. The more things progressed, the more I though that PAZUZU had become a solo project. I wrote nearly all of the music save the outro, which was contributed by Silenius and half of a song, which was written by me and Protector. I now know how I want PAZUZU to sound, far from cliches. Austria has always put out first class black art, and that's how it will always be.

Silenius is now busy enough with SUMMONING and like I said, Protector is quite busy as well. Trifixion, who never did anything on the first album is probably not even worth mentioning, all his so called Black Metal projects have split up.

The subjects brought forth by JRR Tolkien seemed to be highly influential to PAZUZU in the demo stages and also to many other Austrian bands in this genre. Can you elaborate?

Tolkien, although source of inspiration to bands like SUMMONING, plays no major role in my music. I read all his books, because I guess everyone does at some stage in life, but I am by no means a Tolkien maniac, although I can understand why some people are.

He managed to create an awesome world, with it's own cultures, races, politics and quarrels. I mean it's like a completely own world and it certainly can be a great lyrical influence to metal bands. Although I think that Tolkien lyrics best suit bands like SUMMONING a lot better than some brutal and fast Black Metal band.

The lyrics from my demo were all based on occult literature. Mainly the Necronomicon, the Göetia and the Satanic Rituals. There is no religious meaning behind my lyrics, I always try to create a certain atmosphere by writing about certain topics, I think this can be seen best on 'Awaken the Dragon'.

The ABMS had a bit of high profile through 1995-6 but seems to have died down a bit now. What happened, and can you give a bit of background of this group?

The ABMS has been around since 1993. Back then, there was only SUMMONING as the first Austrian Black Metal band (whom I used to sing for), shortly thereafter ABIGOR was formed and then PAZUZU. A bit later PERVERTUM joined the gang, and there we were. 4 bands from Austria, without much press or support. So we just got together, recorded tape compilations of our demo tracks and sold them at a local record shop. We supported each other in the best possible way and we called the whole thing ABMS, Austrian Black Metal Syndicate. We used my post box as contact address and always met in my apartment to design flyers and present new material for demos, etc....

Then, by the end of 1994, PAZUZU was picked up by HNF for a CD and ABIGOR signed there deal with Napalm. SUMMONING and PERVERTUM got deals very fast as well, and there we were, all bands suddenly with deals. The first quarrels were inevitable, especially TT of ABIGOR and Trifixion of PERVERTUM got into arguments more and more often. Trifixion started to develop this really commercial attitude towards Black Metal, and was in it only for the money, but that's obviously not the essence of BM or any kind of music. We are musicians and not businessmen. So ABIGOR and SUMMONING left the syndicate and I was left with PERVERTUM and Trifixion's third class solo project TRIFIXION in the ABMS. Obviously there was no more interest in the whole thing for me, so I decided to call it quits.

The ABMS is now the contact address of PAZUZU, I only support bands that deserve it, and GOLDEN DAWN are one of them. I thought that they were so good that I immediately proposed them to Martin for the ABMS compilation. Now they are signed to Dark Matter.

PAZUZU is a bit unique in the genre for opinions regarding: disgust with fascism, the respectful role of women within the genre, and the open honouring of vast cultural influences. How does this effect PAZUZU's relationship with others who's opinions may lie contrary to your own? In a related topic, what is your opinion of the introduction of politics to black metal? It seems that the most vocal with their political beliefs actually have probably the least amount of political knowledge overall.

Hell yes, PAZUZU is different. I always was and always will be, I mean, it's not so much about being different, just open minded toward other things. It's not about nationalities, sexes, preferences, countries or continents. We all live in one universe. I couldn't give a wet fuck about someone's ideals... It's about what I get from behind all that, whether I like that person or not, period.

I don't see the correlation between fascism and Black Metal, except for the elitarian bullshit. But in what sense are these people elitarian? Musically, racially, or what? I met enough of theses so called elitarian people, from my coun-

try and others, who scream blue murder in interviews, it's always either image or pure stupidity. Discriminating women in the outgoing 20th century... I mean, how much stupider can one possibly become? Although I'm aware of the fact that many of these weirdos want to live in the middle ages (forget not thine toothbrush!), and I guess women didn't have rights back then. It's all just a farce.
On top of that, those who scream TRUE the loudest are often those who put image before musical talent or originality.
I choose my contacts, so evidently, whenever someone starts with this crap I just break off contact to that person, it's as simple as that. I leave everyone to their opinion, as long as they leave me in peace. Besides, what you said is 100% true, these people often seem to spread more hot air than real opinions. I think politics have nothing to do with Black Metal or Gothic, quite the contrary if you ask me. Politics are for Hardcore bands, and I think they are better at this than any Black Metal combo

In reference to 'Baptism of Infant Flesh', are Satanic crimes prevalent in your religion? Do you see Satan as a deity or as a metaphor? These Satanic influences seem far more reserved on the new album, is this aspect not as central to the PAZUZU concept any longer?
As I said earlier, PAZUZU is not a religious band, and I try to keep my beliefs out of my music. PAZUZU serves the listener as a tool to reach a meditative state while closely listening. I see Satan as a pure metaphor. I have a hard time believing that there is Old Nick lurking somewhere in the mist, it's just another divinification of human nature. Just as there is good there must be evil... carry the white but don't forget the black!
I think that Satanic crimes, as you call them, are childish and not very mature. What's the point of going to jail for something you are not even certain exists.
All these Norwegians that burned churches and killed people... they aren't martyrs, they are idiots without a future and purpose to society. Nowadays the world is stronger than the blade...
I try to conceive my lyrics in such a way that they underline the atmosphere, although I have to admit that I was a Satanist when I was much younger.
'Baptism of Infant Flash' is meant to shock people a little. I I find the lyrics fit this song very well, don't you agree (although they are a bit exaggerated)? *(Yes, quite. It's a bit disturbing actually.-S.)*

You are working with the relatively new label DARK MATTER RECORDS now... can you say a few things about the label in general, and your goals for it? Its interesting that you are working with Martin from PUNGENT STENCH, how did this relationship develop?
I have been working for DMR for about 2 years now. It's a very interesting job, and I left university after almost 2 years to start here. I didn't want to be another lazy ass college boy, so I quit. We try to produce good music from bands that are able to produce highclass and original music. We would never sign a band because of image, etc... Besides GOLDEN DAWN and PAZUZU we will also release the debut CD of the Finnish melodic deathsters GANDALF *(I though Earache was on their ass...?-S.)*, who play groovy death metal in the vein of old SENTENCED, newer CARCASS and a strong influence from the immortal IRON MAIDEN. With any luck we will also be signing up another band, but more to that when the time is right.
We have our own 48 track analog/32 track digital recording studio, which fully meets professional international standards. People like José Carreras recorded here. This assures bands unlimited free recording time, which is important, because we want our CD's to sound perfect.
A lot of effort is put into everything, and although it's not always easy work, I love my job here.
I met Martin 2 and a half years ago in a record shop where he used to work. He mentioned the idea of producing a compilation CD with a few Austrian bands, I helped him get the bands together and we have been friends since. After the recordings for the compilation he asked me if I wanted to work with him at Dark Matter. Our boss Richard agreed, and here I am. Dark Matter is a sublabel of the main company Sing Sang Records, and is managed by Martin and me.

Austria is certainly the heart of europe, artistically and culturally, in many ways. What is your relationship to the country and it's culture? Do you consider it as your homeland, something more, or something less?
I love Vienna, it's a great place to live. It's not always the most interesting place, but it certainly has a lot of charm, especially at night, when all the old streets and buildings are illuminated, one can take a long stroll through Vienna and have a beer somewhere, even late at night (we have very loose alcohol laws here).
In a way Austria is my homeland, I was born and raised here, but I am not Austrian by nationality, my mother is Chinese and my father English. But I never lived in either country... so I am Viennese.

In finale, please tell us your aspirations musically which you hope to achieve through your work with PAZUZU and your other projects. What is the end goal?
Hard to say really, I guess I just want to progress a s a musician, become better and be able to write better music.
It's not really about achieving something, I just want to be satisfied. I don't believe that PAZUZU will ever become a really famous band, so I am satisfied with my success. I just hope this whole metal scene will clear up soon and quality will rule over quantity.
One thing's for sure though, I will never follow any weird trend. In the future, my new material will be a lot more symphonic and classical, and I will work more intensely with Elena, my new vocalist. If things progress the way they do now, fans will not have to wait as long as they did for 'Awaken the Dragon'.
I have a project band running with Necros who used to play guitars in another band. We are currently writing material. The music is very much deathmetal, totally rock and roll. It's in any case a good diversion from my work with PAZUZU. It reminds me of when I was younger.

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Sutcliffe Jügend

TAINT torments Kevin Tomkins of SUTCLIFFE JUGEND

With this seminal power electronic act "active" again, we were offered the chance for an interview. Naturally we passed the pleasure over to a certain acquaintance in Texas.

Was Fred and Rosemary West a main factor in starting up SUTCLIFFE JÜGEND again? Did you attend Rosemary's trial? I was told that there's a movie in the works on Fred and Rose; know anything about it? Also are there any details that you've heard(rumours or not) that came out in the trial that aren't in the books(that I know of)? I've heard something about Fred and broken bottles...
I had already decided to start SJ up again when the Fred and Rose case came up. Coincidentally the album was booked to be recorded during Rosemary's trial, so the only information I could use for the album was taken from the newspaper reports at the time. I could not attend the trial because of this booking and other commitments. I could not validate any rumours regards their case and it would seem the truth as to what Fred really enjoyed died with him. The only thing lacking in Fred's case, considering almost every perversion and taste was covered for, was his lack of intellectual reasoning, which was the great appeal of Brady or even Ted Bundy. Having said that, the lack of any morals and 'unusual' sexual taste found through a natural instinctive path is sometimes equally interesting.

Was it your original intention by not including any artwork on the Susan Lawly CD not to give the listener any "promises, posturing, games, or oblique messages"(as Peter Sotos wrote)? Which tracks were previously unreleased? Is there more unreleased archival material?
You've answered your own question with the Sotos quote regarding the cover. The previously unreleased tracks on the Susan Lawly album are: "New Sadism", "The Vicars Muscle" and "Slow Torture" as well as "Sex Beast" and the "Second" and "Third Perversion" tracks(taken from the 'Unreleased Six Perversions' album). There's about eight hours of unreleased SJ material in total.

Was 'Campaign' your first release? How many were produced? I only have 3-4 volumes of 'We Spit On Their Graves' so was much of the Susan Lawly disc from this release? Were the 10 tapes released as a box or separately? How many of those were produced? Also do you have all the SJ bootlegs: 'WSOTG' 10 LP set, 'Sutcliffe Energy' 7" and 'Pleasure Corpse' LP? I think 'PC' is 'Campaign'? What's the material on 'Sutcliffe Energy' 7"?
'Campaign' was the first SJ album, released in 1982. It was soon followed by 'WSOTG'. I do not know how many of each were released. 'WSOTG' was originally released as a box set then as 10 individual one hour tapes. I only have the 'Pleasure Corpse ('Campaign' plus a couple of extra tracks) and do not know what tracks make up the 'Sutcliffe Energy' EP.

In an SJ interview reprinted in Birth/Death, you mention the "torture and execution of cats and other animals" as a SJ live action.
It must be a misquote or made up.

An interview with Kevin Tomkins

Question: What is the aim of SJ's music?
Answer: The pleasure of the attack.
Q: Why did you decide to release the SJ tapes as a boxed set?
A: Simply because it is a ten hour work.
Q. What are your comments on people who criticise you for your stance?
A: They're not worth thinking about.
Q: What are your influences?
A: Peter Sutcliffe. The Marquis de Sade. Himmler and Ian Brady.
Q: What would you describe your music as?
A: Ultra-violent.
Q: Why do you think Peter Sutcliffe is so important?
A: He helped keep prostitutes off the streets and he's a great inspiration to everybody.
Q: Do you think there is a limit to violence in music?
A: No, but there are many courses of action beyond music. In crime, for instance.
Q: Are there any other groups who you think are worthwhile or important at the moment?
A: Private Spy.N.A.M.B.L.A.
Q: Any details of the SJ/Whitehouse video projects?
A: For the ultra series SJ performed two live actions, plus the torture and execution of cats and other animals. Unfortunately these masters were stolen along with the rest of the Come Organisation video equipment.
Q: What is your idia of beauty?
A: The victim.

Did you know William Bennett from the very start of WHITEHOUSE? When did SJ begin and did you have the interest in sexual violence before WHITEHOUSE started? What year of the Ripper murders did you begin taking notice and were you familiar with the areas Peter Sutcliffe operated in or where the prostitutes were picked up in? Did you attend Sutcliffe's trial?
I didn't meet William Bennett till after the release of 'Buchenwald' in '82. SJ was formed in '81 and some of the material on 'WSOTG' comes from this period. My interests in power electronics was a consequence of my interest in sexual violence, not the other way around. My interest in the Ripper murders developed as the pattern emerged, the same as the rest of the country.
I did see him at the trial when he was attacked in prison. I found him humorous, single minded and, incidentally, if they had lined up every man in England he would have been the one you'd have picked out as being the Ripper. There was something in the way he looked at you, quite strange.

Will the CD release of 'WSOTG' be selected material from the ten tapes? Also will there be text and artwork, or simply Peter's photo and track titles? Are you planning to record new material (if 'WSOTG' contains none) or perform SJ live?
'WSOTG' is released on Cold Spring(England). It consists of 2 complete sides of the box set and six further tracks taken from the same collection. The track list is as follows: "Ripper Victims I-XII", "Tortures I-VII", "Necro-Sadism", "Whores Endlosung", "Menta", "Human Disregard", "Sex Beast" and "Hammerdeath(Ripper Attack)". All tracks refer, relate to or represent the works of Peter Sutcliffe. The artwork is again minimal black and white with no "pictures". It includes some short sleeve notes and a discography. The roman numerals on the cover refer to the recording(1982) and release(1987) dates. SJ will be recording an album for Cold Meat Industry later in the year.

Has there been any problems over the lyrical content of BODYCHOKE considering that this project has a much wider, less 'liberal' audience? Does 'Five Prostitutes' refer to someone whose killed 5 prostitutes? I've heard that American Recordings was suppose to release it in the US with text by Peter Sotos; has this been cancelled? What was the content of Peter's text?
It would appear that everyone from record manufacturers, labels, distributors and press, to the listening public have a problem with groups that have an immoral stance, it would be foolish to expect otherwise. The title 'Five Prostitutes' worked on three levels. One: it related to a film we had seen, two: Jack The Ripper and three: there were five of us signing to Warner...

Are whores in London drugged out like they are over here? What does a blowjob go for from a London street hooker? Over here you can talk 'em down to $15 and under. Do you or did you 'date' hookers considering your disgust/obsession with them?
I'd rather not talk about prostitutes.

Is there a specific genre of pornography that you collect? I would imagine good, heavy porn is difficult to obtain in England. Is all of the UK this way? Seen anything worth mentioning lately?
Another difficult question I'd rather not talk about.

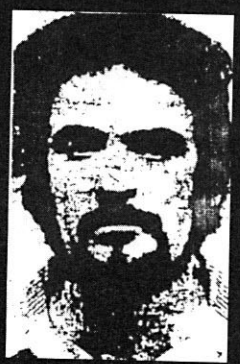
Are you currently interested in power electronics/noise? How would you compare today's 'scene' to the early 'scene'? I think most of today's acts are shit. Very few noisists, especially the Japanese have any subject matter or focus to their releases. It's almost like hippies or punk rockers with FX pedals and analog synths or nonsense like 'found' sounds, organic sound sources and such shit.
I agree wholeheartedly with your comments. I like power electronics when it's used with the right subject matter, and then it has to be done well, for example on 'Erector' or 'Peter Kurten' by WHITEHOUSE. Other power electronics I find the most obnoxious, unlistenable rubbish among all musical styles.

What does "L.C.A." stand for? 2 tracks from 'WSOTG': "L.C.A."(3) and "Sexual Abuse(L.C.A.)"(2)
L.C.A.

List compilations(and labels) SJ contributed to.
"Neuengamme(Black Flag)
(title unknown) (Third Mind)
That's it.

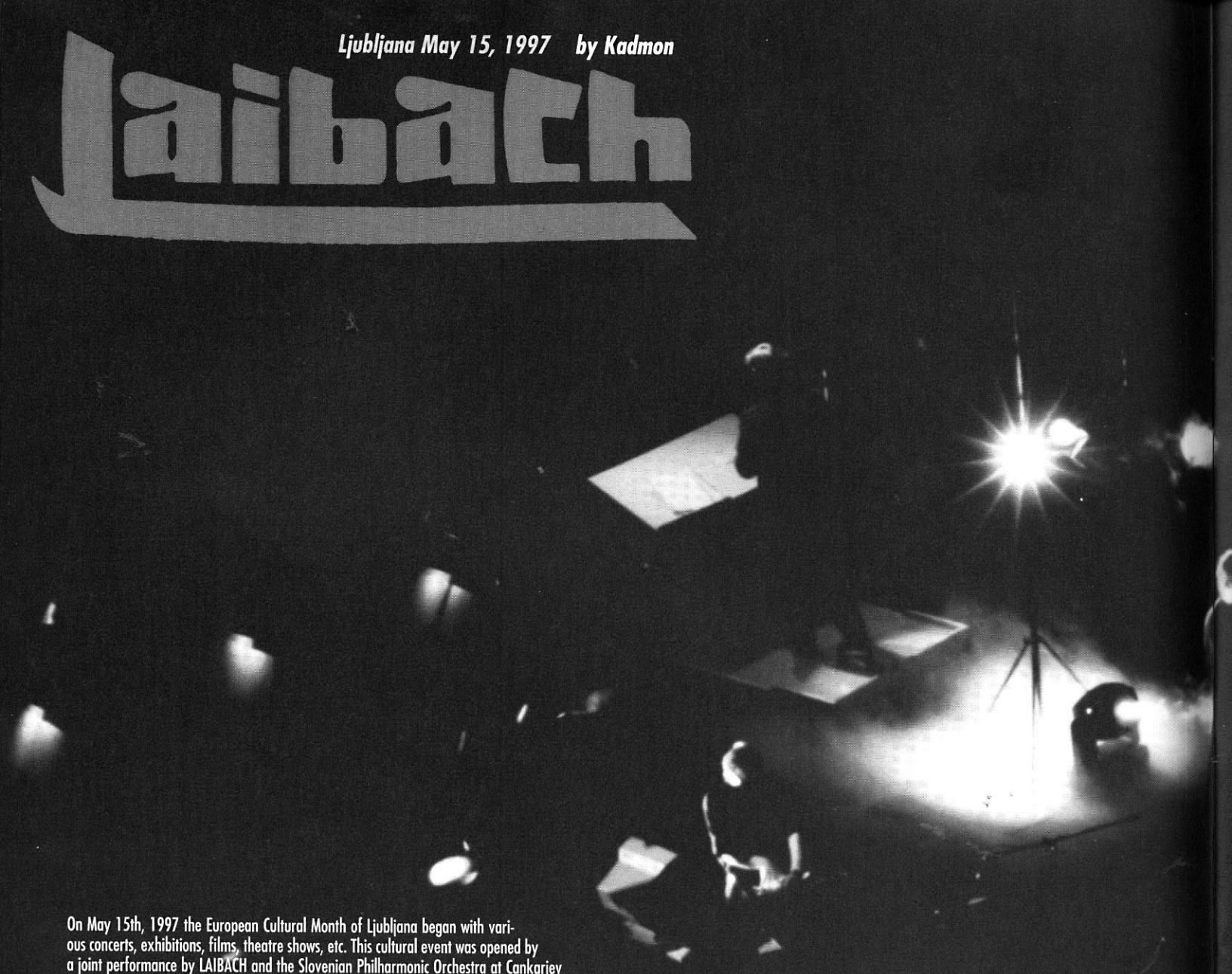
Were the Ultra videos rehearsed prior to recording?
No.

How does it feel to be, and when did you become a bedroom sadist?
What's a 'bedroom' sadist?



Ljubljana May 15, 1997 ***by Kadmon***

LAIBACH

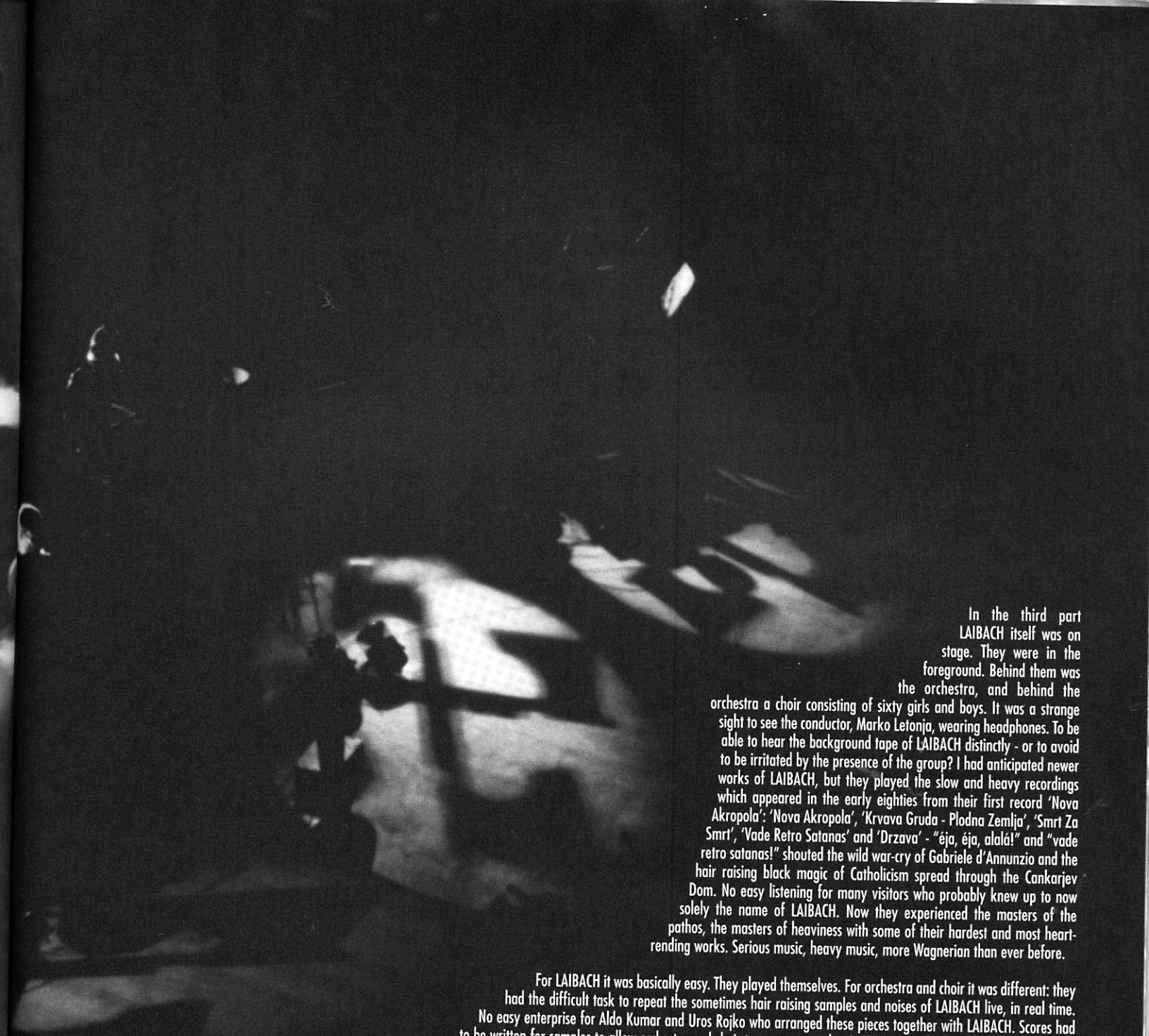


On May 15th, 1997 the European Cultural Month of Ljubljana began with various concerts, exhibitions, films, theatre shows, etc. This cultural event was opened by a joint performance by LAIBACH and the Slovenian Philharmonic Orchestra at Cankarjev Dom, a large venue in the Slowenian capital.

A tremendous resound filled the Cankarjev Dom. The Peter Mlakar entered the stage to hold one of his notorious speeches. He wore a white butcher's apron, the upper part of his body was naked. He read from a piece of paper. His hands trembled. I could not understand what he read. It seemed to be cynical - the audience laughed often.

The first part, Music in Space, consisted of three fragments by LAIBACH, which Uros Rojko had arranged for the orchestra: 'Motention', 'Rituell', 'Dorian Song'. The instrumentarium of LAIBACH was set up but the group was not on stage. The first fragment, 'Motention', resembled much the serious music which I am not too fond of. Everything was so brittle and changed that abruptly. It seemed as if one feared the rhythm. Everything was only outlined. Two beats - then again silence. Drummers who had to wait forty or eighty measures until they were allowed to play again. I also disliked the ecstasy displayed by the musicians. I was anxious for LAIBACH. Anxious for rhythms. The second fragment was 'Rituell'. Now everything was more rhythmical, the influence of Carl Orff could be felt. Not the serene, merry Carl Orff of the Carmina Burana but the dark, mystical Carl Orff with his great, apocalyptic opus 'De Temporum Fine Comoedia', the 'Play of the End of Time' out of which LAIBACH had already quoted 'Opus Dei'. In the folder that was given to the audience at the entrance there was no hint to the actual origin of this fragment which LAIBACH basically had confiscated from Carl Orff - LAIBACH and orchestra just had added some elements. 'Dorian Song', the third fragment, was really beautiful. It was melody with many strings which reminded of some of the smoother works of LAIBACH.

The second part was called 'Retro Axe - Sinfonia' in mode LAIBACH, a composition by Aldo Kumar which was already close at the spirit and the rhythms of LAIBACH with its kettledrums - but it could not yet reach the particular cumbersomeness characterizing and making unique so many works of LAIBACH. This composition reminded in its best elements of Carl Orff too.



In the third part LAIBACH itself was on stage. They were in the foreground. Behind them was the orchestra, and behind the orchestra a choir consisting of sixty girls and boys. It was a strange sight to see the conductor, Marko Letonja, wearing headphones. To be able to hear the background tape of LAIBACH distinctly - or to avoid to be irritated by the presence of the group? I had anticipated newer works of LAIBACH, but they played the slow and heavy recordings which appeared in the early eighties from their first record 'Nova Akropola': 'Nova Akropola', 'Krvava Gruda - Plodna Zemlja', 'Smrt Za Smrt', 'Vade Retro Satanas' and 'Drzava' - "éja, éja, alalá!" and "vade retro satanas!" shouted the wild war-cry of Gabriele d'Annunzio and the hair raising black magic of Catholicism spread through the Cankarjev Dom. No easy listening for many visitors who probably knew up to now solely the name of LAIBACH. Now they experienced the masters of the pathos, the masters of heaviness with some of their hardest and most heart-rending works. Serious music, heavy music, more Wagnerian than ever before.

For LAIBACH it was basically easy. They played themselves. For orchestra and choir it was different: they had the difficult task to repeat the sometimes hair raising samples and noises of LAIBACH live, in real time. No easy enterprise for Aldo Kumar and Uros Rojko who arranged these pieces together with LAIBACH. Scores had to be written for samples to allow orchestra and choir to regenerate what LAIBACH once had created from most various sources. What usually (at LAIBACH performances) only required a key or a button or came from a backing tape, now was played by orchestra and choir. What usually was artificially, technosophic, now was authentic. They had to play everything, smooth sounds, sudden noises, even feedback. An almost sadistic game. But it made this performance so different from all LAIBACH concerts I had ever seen.

Also the lighting was great, the orchestra was dark and only the strings had some light. The choir was plunged in a apocalyptically red light which reminded me of the final part of Carl Orff's 'Play of the End of Time'. In the background there was a black and white movie with old LAIBACH images. The group played in a subtile strobascopic light which obviously should suggest the opposite between tradition and modernity. The musicians were standing in spots. An astonishing panorama of oscillating figures of light and silhouettes of axes in the shape of a swastika was created. As in the selection of the pieces they did not frighten away from the heavy signs and twilights. I loved their courage to remain controversial. "Nothing is true, everything is permitted", said Hassan i Sabbah, William S. Burroughs, Friedrich Nietzche and Ernst Jünger - LAIBACH again gave shape to this sentence.

The applause at the end followed by an artificial applause from the backing tape. At the end the words "LAIBACH - good?" could be heard. I saw several respectable ladies and gentlemen who obviously disliked the performance. Some even closed their ears with their hands, even during pauses. I had the impression that the strange question at the end of the backing tape should make a fool of these visitors.

"All in all I am not interested in musical, but spiritual discussions."
(Carl Orff)

Kadmon, May 28th, 1997
photo: © Ostara
Kadmon, c/o Petak, Postfach 778, A-1011 Wien, Austria

Ain Soph

AIN SOPH blessed us with this rare and privileged interview. This Italian group has left a great and strong impression on us over the years, from the earlier ritual trance sounds to the "newest" album, "Aurora" which presents things on a more traditional musical base. It would be a lie to say AIN SOPH and its creations were never politically nor magickally motivated, it is rather the contrary which is the truth. There are not enough words for this group... Crucifige answered...

Would you call the direction 'Aurora' set an appeal to the youth?

Our intention in realizing 'Aurora' was to stress an ethical and personal approach to very important questions, as we stated very clearly in the booklet inside the CD cover. As such if there's a message there, it is aimed at all those interested, without regard to their age or to their possible political outlook.

'Aurora' seemed to be the point at which AIN SOPH's name was spread to a larger audience. Do you think this predictable with regards to the change?

In fact, it was quite the opposite. In our opinion we deemed it very possible to sell less than before, because of the change in our musical approach. In fact, we felt almost compelled to underline the change from magic to ethics with an extensive change in AIN SOPH's music as well. And this is our approach today, because we are far more interested in being able to express our ideas and feelings rather than in success or selling.

How important is nihilism?

As Julius Evola has pointed out with great clarity, nihilism is at the same time a final point and starting point. For us, it means that one finally understands the emptiness and irrelevancy of both social and personal ideas, opinions, etc., etc.; from that nihilist subconsciousness(which is, by the way, strikingly similar to the alchemic concept of "nigredo", the first phase of the great work) one may then start building his own true ideas, coming from a supernatural clarity and not from subconscious and/or social impulses.

Comments upon the seemingly tight bond that yet still holds Italy and Germany together?

We feel we are not able to answer to this kind of very general questions. In fact, from a magical and ethical point of view, we do have many friends in Germany with an approach similar to our own; however, this is also true for a dozen of other countries, whereas lots of Germans loathe our ideas and values(together, it should be pointed out, with lots of fellow Italians). In any case, we feel that the bonds resulting from partnership in the axis(between 1938 and 1945) are quite irrelevant compared to the complex web of influences(both historical and spiritual) linking each European country to all the others, dating back to pre-Roman times.

Your comments on a quote: "Domestic fury and fierce civil strife shall cumber all the parts of Italy" Giulio Cesare Act III Scene I

In our century, civil war has torn Italy twice: in the 1943-45 period, as everybody knows, and then also in the '70's(Anni Di Piombo), when neo-fascist and ultra-communist young people again fought and died for their ideas. While the strife in the '70's was undoubtedly less widespread and led only to a few dozen killings, we feel quite involved in those facts, as they took place in the roads and squares of our youth.

Our position is quite clear. As we pointed out in 'Aurora' both in the enclosed text and in some lyrics as well, if magic is a progression towards a supernatural state of existence, then doctrines of materialistic refusal of everything sacred are our enemy. And this was also the approach of some among those who took up a gun to save their comrades and themselves from death by fire, a favorite weapon of politically-correct class struggle in their "democratic" opponents opinion. For these clear opinions, we also got caught in some crossfire, albeit it came from Italian reviewers rather than Walther P-38's, the most favored 1970's left-wing instrument of civilized political destruction(and, ironically, the Waffen SS officer's choice toy...)

What role and/or interest has Crowley/ Thelema played in your music, lyrics and symbolism? What was the significance of using the triangle of the Goetia and the passage from Liber Al Vel Legis on the 'Ars Regia' cassette? Enochian and hermetic symbols seem prominent in your graphic designs. What interest and importance do these hold for AIN SOPH? AIN SOPH- the middle veil of existence in the Jewish Kabbalah. How does this play a role in the music and art of AIN SOPH?

With regard to the last questions on magic symbols, etc. this is not, unfortunately, the occasion to make a very long explanation. In fact, Crowley's work and later alchemy and the philosophy of Julius Evola all have been central to our own work. We also published a short collection of essays(now out-of-print for ages) on Kabbalah, magic, alchemy, etc. We can only say that in all our early work everything, from lyrics to music to graphics, down to each single note or the number of drum beats, was absolutely an expression of the ritual being performed. All "musical" concerns being totally and purposefully irrelevance.

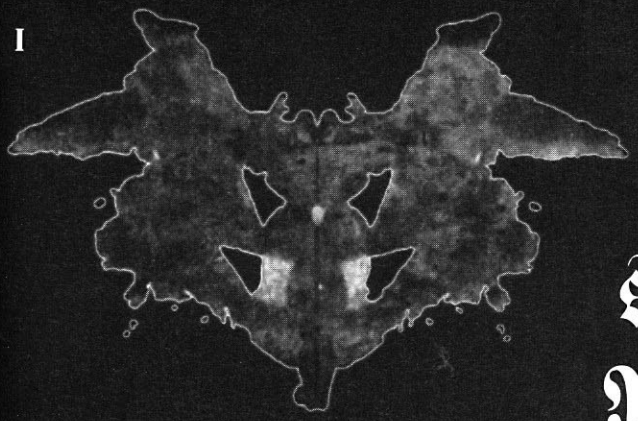
AIN SOPH production during 1984-1997

'I' MC/LP
'II' MC/LP
'III' LP
'Ars Regia' MC/CD
'Sinulacra' MC(Split with SIGILLUM S)
'Ain Soph' MC/CD
'Kshatriya' LP/CD
'Aurora' CD
'Baltikuh' 7"(Split with CIRCUS JOY)

Standard Rorshach test

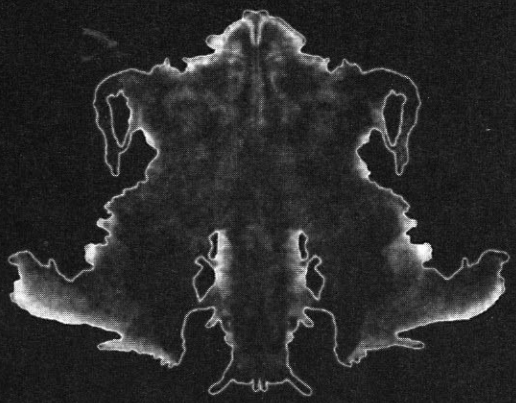
*indicates colour plate

I



III*

IV



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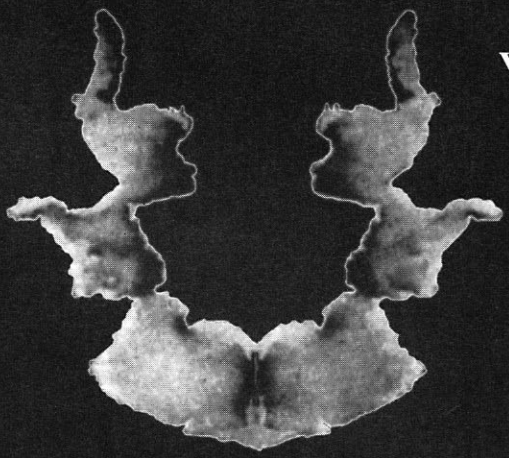

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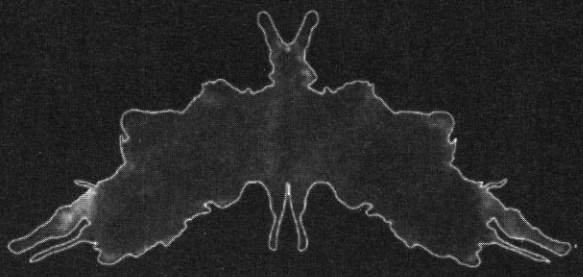

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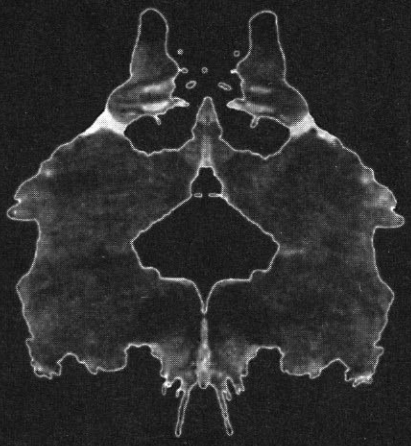
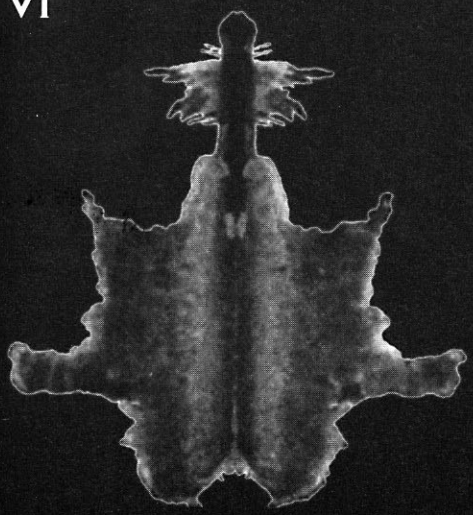


VIII*

VI



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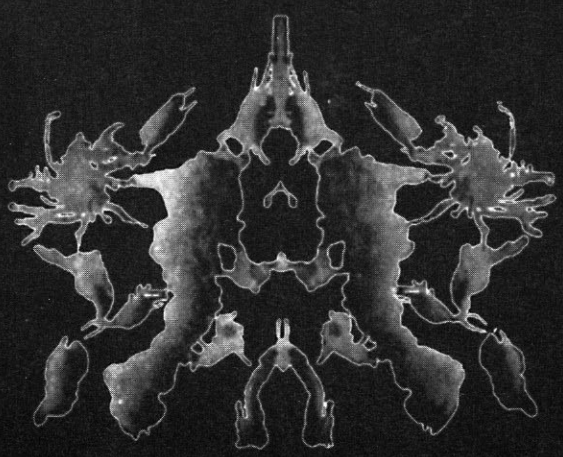


IX*

ABRU

We at DESCENT have been long admirers of the Swedish cult act ABRUPTUM led by It himself. This act released two albums through Deathlike Silence Productions, a seven inch through PS and recently the best album yet (even after departure of the second ABRUPTUM member, namely Evil) through Full Moon. Recently some demo material has been bootlegged (along with the seven inch) through a Mexican label and eventually released officially through Lord Ahriman's Hellspawn Records (whom will also do the fourth album). An exclusive ABRUPTUM track also appeared on the 'Nordic Metal' compilation, released by Necropolis. The sound of ABRUPTUM is over whelmingly drowned in a sea of black chaos... one of the more horrific and

I

I see a Devil or a Demon. He is black and covered with filth hovering in the air with huge wings.
He is grinning in triumph and I feel that I am with Him.
I can also see Him as a piece of land, a continent that is poisoned and burnt to ashes.
I could title it 'The Triumph Of Evil'
He is the great shadow of plague and death, the wielder of depression and hate.
I see people drowning in the compact darkness and evil of His soul.
I think this must be my soul, struggling to come out of this worthless shell and darkness It shall be.

II

This picture seems important to me, I can see many different things here.
There are two Satanic Warriors who are fighting to let the true blood... the true race to rule as it is meant to be.
Their impure blood is flowing down as the world in the center is cleansed from the weak and the false.
I can also see the good god bleeding from wounds, and his blood is not pure as the blood from the race superior-The Sons Of Satan.
The world or the good god is surrounded by the great evil and he's dying. The falling blood is shaped as an angel and born from the god but is to be crushed by the two Warriors.
The angel is the peoples' and the world's last hope but is already dying in our evil hands.
And above the god, I see Satan smiling.

III

I am bloodstained and smiling like I'm really enjoy myself, yes I think I am having fun.
I also see the shadow of my father Satan's face in my face, he seems proud.
I can see my true self here, the eyes shine from the blackest of all evil and I am in final triumph, ahh... this moment of glory?
They will all pay with their blood and their lives for my crowning, the world is but a test.
Now it's there for all to see... my true self as the true Son Of Satan and I will bless them in their own blood.
The world has never seen a greater evil than me.

IV

Yess. He is my servant and he will take care of the white king who's threatening me there in the front.
I think no one could say anything else of this blot than it is of true evil, maybe it is the colour?? No I don't think that is all.
The very shape of The Servant suggests that he is quite brainless and only programmed to protect me. I would need protection. Who is a better protector than one whom has no other thoughts? One that will not turn his back on me but respects and does as ordered.
I am proud of him but the white king seems so determined. Maybe I must try to deal with the threat myself?? No, the white king is set on me and hasn't noticed my Servant so he must die
Yes, my Servant's black tears will wipe him away.

V

It's a bewinged messenger. But the news he is bringing is bad.
Someone of my men has been blinded by falseness and now is fighting against me.
But this could also mean that some of my close Brothers or friends have turned their back on me.
The messenger tells me this by holding his wings over the eyes of his face, that one is blinded, I would tell the messenger to go and bring this soul to me, for I own it.
I do not know this messenger too well only that he will obey.
This is an obstacle I have to deal with quickly or the problem will just grow.

PTUM

genuinely tortured sounds to emerge from any extreme northern underground act, completely improvised and very original, this group will probably never emerge from the depths but for those whom appreciate these disturbing sounds we are completely satisfied. This act is the subject of several legends and mysteries, which are best left to those whom appreciate, and the source of a great many descentions through the endless bog of enlightenment. After three years It has answered our inquiry, although in leu of the standard questions we sent a set of ten Rorshach: Psychodiagnostics blots to allow a deeper probe into the psyche of this mastermind. Things became much more revealing than we had hoped...

VI

This one is my counsellor. He is very, very wise.
He must be a General in my army and a very close friend and Brother.
This picture tells me of somebody who is very powerful and as He respects me, I do pay Him respect back.
But I also see His ambition and and that is very dangerous here, secretly He would like to rule instead of me but as I know it I could stop him anytime.

VII

Two Brothers balancing.
They must be very careful to get the right balance. They must trust each other and pay one another equally as much respect otherwise everything will break apart.
Someone has planted some bad rumours here, that one is an enemy and wants the brothers to break apart.
The balance is infected by this enemy so the two Brothers must not fail in equality, if they do, the enemy will win.
They have the same purpose and are linked together.
The higher meaning must be reached.

VIII

This is the great Guardian of nature.
His hands are bloody for he has come to take revenge on humanity.
I can also see two people kiss each other in the front, their faces are pressed together and I think they are sexually attracted to each other.
The Guardian will stop them from bringing more children to this fucked up world.
But nature will not win it seems since his arms have now turned into two gigantic animals that are climbing upwards.
The animals protect the humans and will kill the nature.
There will be no no revenge.

IX

Two pregnant Devil whores will bring forth the future of the world, and I can see the world bleeding rivers of blood.
But the blood seems to be shaped like a woman who is lying down with Her legs spread apart. Yes, I can see Her cunt.
This represents how the world feels, how Mother Earth feels after all the four seasons I wrote about in Via Dolorosa.
The world is ugly, torn, raped and used and from the ashes the Great Satanic Empire will rise.
Mother Earth is lying there waiting for the fallus of death to penetrate Her. She has no breasts, or empty ones perhaps.
The children of the earth have drank up all the life giving fluids from Her breasts.
Two angels representing Her soul are about to leave Her body, those are the green continents you see also representing the world.
The soul of the world will now leave.

X

Here is the final one, it seems interesting.
This ink blot represents more than anything else.
I see a King in the center, it is me with a great crown.
Oceans of blood are flowing around me but they are poisoned black by my evil. The very end of the world has arrived, and so has the Empire Of Satan.
I can see my Brothers with drawn weapons fighting for our cause and everything is a great chaos, the world will burn.
There's no peace, no light, no good left.
This is what I was born to.
We are rejoicing and having a feast for the coming age where we will prosper.
But I can also see the king in the middle is the white king, god.
He is lit on fire and a stake is being forced into his head.
Either way, it means that me and my brothers will prevail.

ALLEGORY CHAPEL LTD.

Our friend Elden M. leads this phenomenal power electronic project from the bay area. Truly brutal material erupts from this one... innovation (a rare thing with these sounds) constantly keeps it interesting however. Bane's chat with the man in charge turned out to be a long one...

Briefly relate your musical history and how did you discover music and sound?

My college theory teachers were major players who were very adept at projecting their enthusiasm for music, and taught in a very easy, understandable, and personable way. We used Harmony By Piston as our main text, because my teacher studied under Walter Piston, and Piston was a protege of Stravinsky! I was exposed to the great experimenters of sound, the new composers: Cage, Stockhausen, Varese, Webern, Subotnik, etc. who influence me to this day! Because of this, I don't hold the opinion that formal training is restrictive or destructive to creativity. Theory is only a tool, an aid to articulating and accomplishing a desired goal. Of course, another major development, in addition to formal training, was my being exposed to Industrial music and punk culture-- when the conventional major label pop status quo was being rejected by the underground as being too corporate(as it still is). I discovered THROBBING GRISTLE, SPK, Boyd Rice and NON, Monte Cazazza and FACTRIX, CABARET VOLTAIRE, etc. alongside BLACK FLAG, MINOR THREAT, AVENGERS, DEAD KENNEDYS, etc., and going to shows in SF and Berkeley as early as 1979(the scene revolved around places like Mabuhay Gardens, Sound Of Music, the Deaf Club, Valencia Tool And Dye, Berkeley Square, Ruthie's Inn, etc.); the Bay Area was a hot-bed of alternative culture, and this climate inspired me to join bands and record music.

ALLEGORY CHAPEL LTD. was formed in 1983, originally consisting of three separate entities which existed simultaneously: a 4-piece(post-JOY DIVISION styled) with guitar/vocals, bass, female drummer and me on keyboards(based in SF); an experimental dance-oriented electronic duo(based in Vacaville, where at the time, Charles Manson was imprisoned at the California Medical Facility!)-- this duo later changed it's name to Carbon 14; and third, my solo recordings of experimental concrete/collage noise-music. Later, I decided to continue to release solo cassettes after disbanding the 4-piece. I released several tapes on my own label, and also on Freedom In A Vacuum(Canada), Nihilistic(Holland), S.O.P.(New York), G.R.O.S.S.(Japan), as well as compilation tracks(on Charnel, Relapse/Release, Index, Turbine, BBP, Vinyl Communications, etc.); my first CD "When Angels Fall" was released by Charnel Music in 1995.

Your influences are evident but reflective of then and now. The importance of this?

My recordings are the distillations of my influences and life experience. Originally, my recordings were of a journalistic mature, that is, they were only documentation onto tape of my experiences, what I heard and what I imagine. Now the recordings have evolved to be more than mere "snapshots"; they are more extreme in nature and execution but remain accessible in terms of addressing current and contemporary situations.

You know how there are all these pictures of guys with swords and clubs in the woods? I've always envisioned a portrait of myself in very sterile, modern surroundings-- with high-tech computer gear all around me, prominently holding a 9mm. Smith & Wesson or a Mac. 10. that's my idea of the real world: high-tech fire-power in the hyper-speed, electronically-transmitted information age! Information is power: Luddites be damned-- instead of "Ghost in the Machine", I believe that Satan rules the world from inside a silicon chip!

Comments on the use of music as a weapon.

Music is a powerful tool, indeed; as an instrument of destruction in the right hands, a very powerful weapon! There are various psychological aspects inherent in the combination of frequencies and tonalities in music that are utilized by skilled composers to manipulate the listeners, and these techniques were discovered centuries ago and passed through the generations, surviving as classics and traditional cultural art. Much, such as the very powerful, legendary Enochian keys, survive only as mere myth(or alchemical recipe/ritual found in Anton LaVey's Satanic Bible); while modern technology is beginning to uncover modern, albeit natural phenomena such as "Subsonics", "Infrasonics", ultra-sound, etc., through sonology and government funded(sometimes clandestine) experimentation or R&D for military applications. Have you seen those new, mechanical kitchen gadgets that has a wiggly "S" shaped wire that is inserted into a raw egg and when turned on(it's electric, of course) scrambles the yolk and egg white together(for instant scrambled egg, before the shell is cracked over a hot frying pan)? Well, that's how music and sound can be-- scrambling your brains within the cranial cavity! Or, picture a microwave oven, which utilizes the ability to heat internally by vibrating molecules from within through the ultra-high microwave frequencies; this same technology is used to surgically blast gall stones, without the need for exploratory cutting prior to surgery(this use of sound is completely separate and different from the use of surgical micro-lasers)...

A book that has been really valuable to me is Psychology of Music by Carl Seashore; it may too theory-oriented for the average reader, but in the right hands (all you "audio alchemists" out there), this book is indispensable!

Is the evolution of ALLEGORY CHAPEL LTD. also a philosophical one? If so, how has it affected your music?

My personal philosophy, like my maturation and self-growth, is a perpetual evolutionary process, therefore, yes, my music is definitely affected-- constantly changing and evolving. I try to stay true to my main goal of producing work that remains cutting edge and is extreme as a true alternative to the mediocrity and blandness surrounding us in the form of today's mass culture. Of course, to achieve this I have to be a "POPologist" and be able to stay ahead of the trends, to attempt to actually invent something new. Anyone who says that they don't pay attention to what's going on with mainstream culture is totally bullshitting. There's nothing worse than a con-artist who purports to be inventing something new, when all they're doing is recycling the same old trash that they've been weaned on, but are now claiming to reject.

I have set high standards for myself and the way I live my life; I endeavor to translate those standards over to my recordings; a concentration at being unique, distinctive and high-calibre. My method of a music plus noise hybrid/blend is indicative of my personal philosophy of using the classics and tradition with modern techniques and advances. Sure, I'm into high-tech gadgetry and weaponry, cars, television and video, but I have on occasion immersed myself in archaic ritual, studied the classical painters, writers and composers, and even "searched" for myself and the meaning of life in the full glory of nature-- in places like the forest of Yosemite, the snows of the Sierras, the Santa Cruz mountains(where Edmund Kemper and Herbert Mullen stalked their victims) Topanga Canyon(what little nature is left there, since post-Manson family, the place is over-run with affluent homes and estates), and the tropical rain forests of Southern Philippines(in search of Muslim headhunters and marijuana plants growing twenty feet tall!)

As my Satanic tendencies surface more and more, my music tends to become darker, more aggressive. There is a dark side to all of us. Some would label us "negative", but used constructively, this energy can create what I believe can be enduring work. But this is not meant to be altruism, for I don;t care what happens to everyone else, not especially the weak and undeserving of life. Sure, I am a lover of nature and "the innocents"-- animals, children, plants, etc. but lately I've begun= to think that this earthly place may only be a transitory dimension to something or somewhere more; so at my most nihilistic, I often say "Fuck this place, everything and everyone- blow it all to Hell! My continuing to try achieving the best is evidence that I have not fully resigned myself to total oblivion. After all, we have to make the most out of a rotten situation while we're here. We all have as obligation to ourselves(alone, if for no one else) to be the best; and musically speaking, there's so much shit out there, the worst crap is so much offensive pollution to my soul! When you are offended, you must try to eliminate that which offends you(or you remove yourself)-- with music, I create what is satisfying to only myself and therefore am able to eliminate any offensive pollution.

To what extent does an urban environment effect your music?

An urban environment at the very least has had an adverse effect on my ability to record. There are so many distractions, mentally, physically, visually, socially, etc. The biggest drain is on what little time I have freed up to record. When I lived in the suburbs I could record almost at a whim, nut now, recording is only a small fraction of my schedule.

One thing that has surfaced within me from living in an urban environment as a latent misanthropic attitude. Living here certainly contributes to any predilection towards being a Social Darwinist!

What inspires your works?

I'm not easily convinced or impressed by all these albums that have pictures of true gore or extreme alternative eroticism masquerading as worthy cover art. How many nerdy musicians have really looked at a stiff's brain spilling out onto concrete? How many out there have seen true torture for pleasure and entertainment? Have you ever seen a baby carriage(with an infant inside) go flying after being hit by a car attempting to stop(even though moving at only three miles an hour!)? Have you ever been to a cock fight and seen a man killed by an out-of-control rooster with razor sharp knives attached to it's spurs? Have you ever stared down the barrel of a loaded gun(held by an enemy of a rival gang) and instantaneously visualized this huge lead bullet travelling out from the chamber and slamming into you?!? If I go any further, what I say may tend to incriminate me...

How important are symbols?

Symbols are merely mnemonic aids-- analogous to ALLEGORIES. Words are symbols. Symbols can be allegorical or simply a visual sign of what to expect, what lies ahead. When used as sigils, I do believe that certain symbols have power, possible magickal properties. Currently, the Sigil of Baphomet is a very powerful symbol to me, both philosophically and in relation to the music that I now enjoy, and of course, symbols signify affiliations(I "affiliate" with 666, man!)...

I thought I had invented the A.C.Ltd.. symbol one night when a friend and I were fucking around on his computer. I told him to draw(on screen) a triangle with three equidistant sides an equilateral triangle- a structurally sound geometric shape used in building cantilever bridges, and this could symbolize the peak of a church spire); from a center point within the triangle, three arms were to radiate outward towards the corners, but midway out each arm to veer to a corresponding side, bisecting each side to form that appears to be a tri-armed swastika. My friend(who is Jewish) commented on how it looked like a neo-Nazi symbol, and I was pleasantly amused to later find that, indeed, this is the same symbol used by the A.W.B..(the South Afrikaan organization headed by White power leader Terre Blanche)! Someone else(a closet Thelemite) told me that this was also a Christian symbol of the three sevens signifying the Holy Trinity. Well, being the self-styled Satanist that I am, All this only affirmed my determination to use this symbol as the ACL logo! Don't forget that the swastika was used by Asian cultures centuries before Hitler appropriated it for his Third Reich(this is partial evidence of Hitler's attempt to "borrow" from the magickal traditions of ancient Tibetan, Hindu and Buddhist culture).

Your approach to certain doctrines concurrent to LaVey's brand of Satanism...?

Well, don't forget that I have made you a charter member in our newly established Coven of "L.D.S."-- Latter Day Satanists(inspired by the Mormons)!

LaVeyian Satanism is great because it is very pro-individual, self-accountability oriented. The Divine Doctor has borrowed much from Nietzche and Redbeard's Might Is Right which is essential for any would be Social Darwinist, and also to understand the concept of "Stratification". I think that it's great that Church Of Satan members are divided over whether Neo-Nazism and Neo-Fascism has any place in Satanic doctrine(I personally think that these totalitarian systems do have contributing relevance within the Church Of Satan- even though in a totalitarian regime Satanists and other "alternative" types would be the first to be scheduled for extermination); I'm for all and any extreme group(or what conventional society deems "extreme") qualifying as "Satanic". As an ex-Christian-- I was brought up Vatican II(but I can remember Latin Mass), I can appreciate LaVey's inclination for ritual and establishing a Satanic hierarchy("The Black Pope") and tradition; but media-circus and personality cult aside, LaVey's brand of Satanism qualifies as New Age self-improvement therapy and this is where some of the more extreme groups have a problem with LaVey's Church. There will always be those who consider LaVeyian Satanism "not extreme enough", myself included. Let me just say that true, unbridled Evil con not be harnessed and restricted from following it's inherent path of destruction and natural change. "Monsters" like Richard Ramirez or Charles Manson are true Satanic elementals existing and performing in accord with nature and the evolutionary process.

I also have to say that I am in full agreement with LaVey when he says that racism has no place in Satanic Doctrine-- Satan is an equal opportunity devil! Any race that suffers from in-breeding abandons the evolutionary process, is suicidal and is destined for complete extinction.

Can you tell us about the importance of voices and how you utilize them in your work?

I hit on the use of voices in my recordings early on when I discovered their ability to generate intense sensations in listeners. I know that early industrial artists utilized voices for a subliminal attack, but I found that the frequencies of people screaming and yelling produced an instantaneous reaction that was very stark, uncomfortable, and long lasting. This is something that I would guess that any recording artist would take advantage of, but the use of intensive purgative or pained voices is seldom as effective as I prefer it to be. The frequencies that make up a human scream have imprinted themselves into every human and primate DNA molecule from primordial times to the present as a warning code that triggers the "fight or flight" response in all of us. Just as the flame from a burning match would cause you to make a reflexive jerking away from the heat, so would the sound of a scream also cause you to prick up your ears, raise goosebumps, and even produce an adrenaline rush. The first full length recording I made consisting almost entirely of screaming/yelling voice samples was the cassette for Freedom In A Vacuum, "Assaults on the Human Body", which I believe was a major breakthrough in defining a distinctive and unique ALLEGORY CHAPEL sound. This sound was further explored, enhanced, and evolved with "Demimonde Voices" on G.R.O.S.S. Side B(studio side) of "Excursion Into The Pit"(Recalcitrant Noise) was an exercise in trying to achieve an attack or atmosphere even more extreme than ever before-- and still using the same methods that I'm most comfortable with but always trying to perfect. The best feature of utilizing these voices-- what message, if any, that these voices are attempting to project is of no consequence(the more obscured or unrecognizable the original message, the better)-- is that listeners may interpret and visualize an action accompanying the sounds any way they wish or can.

ACL, 601 Van Ness Ave #E3-450, San Francisco, CA, 94102-3200, USA

Photo: Charles Pinion and Debbie Jaffe

Beyond Dawn

Jeff "Waggy" Wagner interrogates our old friend Einer Sjurso

regarding his excellent

and ever evolving

provokation

Seemingly in a state of suspension in 1997, the outside world's last acquaintance with Norway's enigmatic BEYOND DAWN was through the murky, bleak purge of "Pity Love", released in late '95. The band has actually written 15 songs or so in the interim, though behind the creative surge that graces these songs are questions of stability within the infrastructure they're encased in. Vital member Petter Haavik is currently in the midst of a three-year college course in England, and the band's current label, Candlelight, have rejected what was intended as the band's next venture, the 6-song "In Reverie" acoustic EP. Apparently too far beyond what the label expects of BEYOND DAWN, the band's future hangs, at the time of this writing, in a frustrating limbo. In relation to the marketing/record-biz bullshit that most bands are forced to deal with (what do you mean?-Stephen), BEYOND DAWN's music is difficult and confusing. To a listener demanding only the most rewarding, cathartic listening experience, the band are a supreme and epic force. One should remain confident (as hell) that the latter sentiment matters infinitely more in the end. This band comprises nothing short of true artistry. And as true artists will, they'll persevere.

With excellent new material like "I Am A Drug," "Naked (How To Produce Honesty)" and "Side By Side" under his belt and an unwavering belief in his band, drummer Einar Sjurso is hardly let down with any of the setbacks, knowing the inherent strength of the material will have its way with listeners in due time. Oddly (as is often the case within BEYOND DAWN's halls of lament), we begin the conversation discussing Einar's activities in his other band, the far-other-side-of-the-spectrum bestial terrors, INFERNÖ.

Can I call you Necrodevil?
[Laughing] You can call me Einar today, although I have been rehearsing with INFERNÖ. Still got the hair stuck down my throat.

Tell me about the second INFERNÖ record.
Well, we have about eight new tracks done, and we're working on another one. I think we'll be done in about two weeks *[late June '97]* and then we'll go in the studio and just lay it down.

Is it still total DESTRUCTION worship?
No!

Don't you think the first one was stuff like "Infernal Invasion"?
Yeah, of course, but we tried to come up with more of our own stuff this time. It's still very INFERNÖ but it's less recognizable riffs.

How did INFERNÖ originate?
Initially it was a band I had in about 1992, and we were three guys just playing covers of all the metal bands we liked, and that kind of just went down the drain. A couple years later I decided I'd like to do something like that again, a bit more serious. I met Aggressor, from VED BUENS ENDE and AURA NOIR. There are two other guys, there's Bestial Tormentor *[laughing, apparently at the name]*, who now plays the bass, he did the guitar on the first album but he has switched to bass. And there's the vocalist... the reason why he's not credited on "Utter Hell" is because he didn't have time to get a photo! But he's been in the band the whole time, and we went on tour with him and everything.

And what's his name?
Uhh...Hazardous Pussy Desecrator! *[laughing]* He's the most freaked of us all.

So INFERNÖ's a very cerebral project?
Oh, definitely! *[laughing]* No, it's not songs that we're just kidding around with. We don't. We try to do something that we really want to do.

Out of all the retro bands swarming around these days, "Utter Hell" definitely carries the most authentically "1985" vibe, song and soundwise.
Yeah. The second album's gonna sound like it's from '82 or something. It's more VENOM and HELLHAMMER influenced than the last one. It will be called "Downtown Hades".

What do you think of some of those kinds of bands, like GEHENNAH or BEWITCHED?
Umm...I really like ABSU. And GEHENNAH are okay, but a bit too much rock`n'roll for me. And the same with BEWITCHED, they're more like MERCYFUL FATE influenced, I think. It's not so raw!

What about KVIKKSOLVGUTTENE?
Necrobutcher's project? I haven't heard it but I heard about it. They named their album *["Gamlem"]* after a famous Norwegian serial killer! *[laughing]* That's really funny!

Let's discuss BEYOND DAWN. Is Petter Haavik out of the band now?
Yeah, he went to England to study sound technology at the Institute of Performing Arts that Paul McCartney went to. It's a three-year course. But he's home now for vacation for three months, so we're rehearsing with him and trying to do some gigs with him, but of course he can never be that much involved when he's away for so long. His absence has undoubtedly had an effect on the song writing, he is naturally not as involved as he was in the past.

Will he be as much a part of the writing structure as he has been in the past?
Well, he hasn't been the last year, because he hasn't been around. It's mostly Tore *[Gjedrem, bass/vocals]* and Espen *[Ingierd, guitar/vocals]* starting the writing of the stuff. But he has still co-written several of the songs that will be on the next album, but for natural reasons, the material that has surfaced the last year has been done by Tore and Espen.

Are you still writing lyrics?
Oh, not really for BEYOND DAWN, because Tore and Espen have started making their own songs, basically, and then they write the lyrics as well and that's okay because I don't think it could get much better. They have it all figured out.

What's happening with the anticipated release of the "In Reverie" material?
Well, at the moment we're not really sure about what's happening. Lee, from Candlelight, still wants to release our second album, but he doesn't want to release the acoustic one, and we don't want to compromise that, so we're still looking. The ideal thing for us is to release the next album as a double CD, because that would be a great marketing step, I think, because "In Reverie" is so much different from everything else, I don't think the audience would understand it [if it were released on its own]. One double CD containing the main album and one bonus being the "In Reverie" CD.

Will Candlelight release the double CD?
I don't think so, really. They're not real interested in the acoustic stuff *(you should read the OPETH interview-Stephen).*

It sounds very much like BEYOND DAWN to me. Is there some other characteristic in the material, besides being acoustic, that Lee feels is radically different from your usual material?
No, it's very much BEYOND DAWN from a writing standpoint. But as far as recording goes, we went through a totally different process this time, because it's all totally digital. All sampled. It's not really played. We recorded one riff at a time and just hooked it together in the computer, but it doesn't sound like that. It was a very positive experience. I don't think we should do that with the ordinary stuff because those tracks, the acoustic ones, were mainly made in the studio and just pieced together as we went along. It's not something we play in the rehearsal studio.

If you used that method of recording for your new stuff, "I Am A Drug" or "Side By Side," would the end result be too mechanical, not earthy enough?
Yeah. It's the way we've written them, you know. We've been playing the 'normal' tracks in rehearsal for a year, and it would be funny to go into the studio and just play one beat and one riff. It wouldn't be natural, I think.

There seems to be some electronic percussion in the new stuff, as in "I Am A Drug." Will that be used more in the future?
We have a drum computer, and it's me playing along with it. On the album it will be much more developed. Those demos are kind of rough and not really finished. If you like them you will be totally blown away by the final creation, plus we have another nine songs.

Can you give me the titles and ideas behind these new tracks?
There's one called "Tender," which is very intense *(obviously-O'M)*. I would plan to have it as an opener. The beat is in five, not in four. It's very big and overwhelming. There's another track called "Life's Sweetest Reward," which is also very great because it's basically a death metal beat. It's very dynamic, it goes up and down in volume and intensity, but it doesn't sound like death metal. It's a very melodic thing with a beat that sounds demented. I'm really excited about that track as well. There's another song, which is the only one I did the lyrics for this time, which is called "Phase To Phase," and that's more of a moody, very spacey track, getting very monumental towards the end, very much.

It sounds like the new album will be more dynamic than "Pity Love".
Yeah. We want to do all different kinds of things and still make it sound like one band.

Have you completely forsaken the tortured, desperate vocal cries that characterized your earlier material?
We're a bit more selective about that, I think.

It appears in a more subtle form in "Breathe The Jackal."
Yeah. It will be much less than on "Pity Love", but we have 13 tracks planned for the next album, and we have already started writing stuff for the next *[third]* album. Those songs *[for the third album]* will be a lot more intense again, so you never know where we're heading. We might have a song with only trombone, percussion and screams. I can't foresee that now.

The last song on "In Reverie", "Naked (How To Produce Honesty)," includes some very powerful dialogue. Where is this sample taken from?
That is a piece of dialogue we sampled from the movie *Paris, Texas* by Wim Wenders. We are quite into movies, and it was only natural that we had to do something like this sooner or later. It works almost as a soundtrack to that scene. I'd love to do a real soundtrack once.

The lyrics flow like poetry, and convey some very deep emotions. You wouldn't know from reading the lyrics that your native language is not English.
We start English at 4th grade, and then you have it all through school after that. To me, it's always been natural to write in English because it's much easier to not sound stupid. *[laughing]* Sometimes it is good, but I don't think I would. It's not really our thing. I don't think our music style is very Norwegian, either, it sounds very universal.

Are you still treading the same lyrical paths for all the new material you're writing? Grief, loss, lament.
Oh yeah. Soul therapy. We don't like to discuss it much because to us it's just pathetic when an artist gives away all of his thoughts to the rest of the world, and we don't want to do that. But we're so very into the music and the words and people can read and think what they like. If the words appeal to them in any way, that's what we want.

Although it's a cliche question, the grasp that BEYOND DAWN has of its music and its instruments leads me to ask you who your personal inspirations are for your particular instrument?
I started off listening to KISS, and of course Peter Criss is important. Drummers like Matt Cameron from SOUNDGARDEN is great . Of course Dave Lombardo. The DANZIG drummer, Chuck Biscuits. There's lots of drummers really, there's not just one that I like. But the first one I heard was Peter Criss *(Dale Crover-S).*

Have you seen the reformed KISS?
Yeah. It was good, but they're getting old. They're really good, but I think they were better when they did it the first time.

Is it fair to say there's a large SWANS influence in the music you've written for the second full-length?
Yes. There are certain elements in BEYOND DAWN that you could easily say are influenced by SWANS, yeah. Because of that, we've become more conscious about not doing it too much. Personally, I don't think our new stuff is as much SWANS-influenced as the stuff on "Pity Love" is.

How many shows has BEYOND DAWN played?

The last one we played was one and a half years ago, because since then the band have been almost dissolved because of the trips abroad and school and everything, it's pretty much the last half year that we've started rehearsing seriously. Gigs, we've done maybe 15 to 20.

What kind of crowd do you seem to draw?
It seems like the last three gigs we did in '95, around the time we released "Pity Love", it was a very diverse audience, really. Metal people, and goth people and alternative and industrial people, everyone, basically. And we're happy with that. We don't want a clarified audience.

It seems like your choice of band name was a very deliberate way to keep yourself open to play any sort of music you wish, to keep yourselves open to constant progression.
Actually, when we formed, we were quite young, not very good musicians, but we wanted to have a name that was not like the same death/gore names. That was the only intention. As time went on, I actually started reflecting on that name a bit, and you're right... in fact, to put it in a cheesy way, you can find whatever you want beyond dawn.

At what point did you decide that you wanted to incorporate an unconventional instrument into your sound, and what made you pick the trombone?
It was more of a practical ambition, because we knew this guy and we knew he could play and we knew it would sound good so we just tried it out. We went along with it and it started becoming more and more a part of our sound. It was in '93, I think, right before we recorded the mini-CD.

Do you plan to expand your instrumentation to incorporate other unusual sounds, and if so will you make these permanent additions?
We always try out new things. On this next recording we're planning on using strings, maybe mellotron, samples and stuff like that. Live we have the idea of adding a percussionist. As for permanent, well, nothing's ever permanent about BEYOND DAWN, and that's the thrill of it, too.

Because of the rapid and ongoing expansion of your sound, I would like you to give some of your thoughts of each of BEYOND DAWN's musical periods, beginning with your first official recording, the "Up Through The Linear Shades" seven-inch (Cult-Stephen).
It was our first record, so it was obviously a bit special for us. We didn't really have a clue back then, and when listening to it now, it's more of a nostalgia trip than anything else. There is some good stuff on it, but the execution is really poor, as is the production which we spent a ridiculous amount on. No regrets, though.

"Longing For Scarlet Days".
On this one we started stalking new musical territories that we had barely hinted at with the 7". It's not an absolute masterpiece, but I can still listen to it with a silly grin on my face.

"Pity Love".
We were getting somewhere on this one, I think, and although I'm sick of a couple of the songs, I think there are some really good ones on it as well. "Storm" is perhaps my favorite, a songs which we plan to seriously re-do live. The production is far from perfect, but all in all it's a pretty good album, I think.

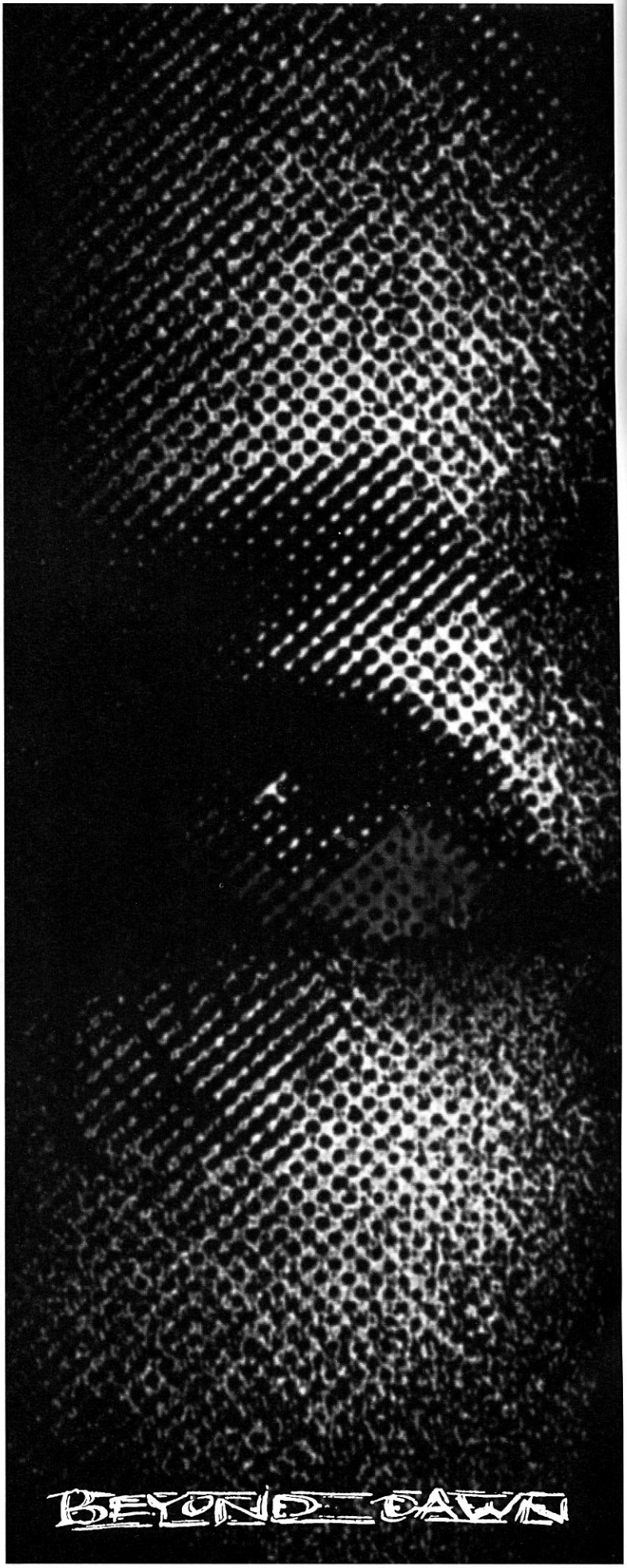
The "In Reverie" EP, plus the forthcoming full-length.
We might call the whole package "Omnibus". The material we are gonna record for this one is definitely the strongest Beyond Dawn to date. The style is so much more individual now, and there's a lot of

diversity in the tracks. These songs were made from mid-'95 until now. We have 13 completely finished songs, but I think only about ten of them are gonna wind up on the album. Choosing the tracks that will be excluded won't be an easy task, that should give you some idea about our belief in the material. Some song titles [that I haven't mentioned earlier] are "Cigarette" and "On The Subject Of Turning Insane."

What's on BEYOND DAWN's horizon at this time?
It depends, really. First we have to sort out the deal thing... find out if we're staying on Candlelight or if we can have other offers. People at labels, they have a hard time figuring out how to make money on a band like us, because it's not a usual band. You wouldn't know how to market a band like us if you had a metal label, and I can understand that. We're different, and we need a label with different ideas. Unfortunately, we haven't really gotten in touch with such a label as of yet, but we have interest from a few, but still no real contract. We want to record the album this summer, because we're basically ready any time.

What do you recommend, for the listener, to get the absolute most out of BEYOND DAWN's music?
I believe the music we make is not easy listening, it's not background music or anything. We demand something from the listener, but what it is exactly I don't know. There is a reason for BEYOND DAWN not being very popular, I guess. I don't think it's music for everyone.

BEYOND DAWN, H.H. Vei 30A, 1412 Sofiemyr. Norway



KDNR

We were very pleased to 'discover' this strange Italian group by the name of KDNR via an equally obscure CD release on the OEC label. With a simple description: KDNR represent an abstract electric art form perhaps best summarized as experimental (in my ears anyhow). Collages of natural sound create a very unnatural end product of beautiful result. By chance I managed to interview the head of this project, Marco Sandrini as the summer began to bear down on us this year.

Please tell me the meaning of the name KDNR and why is an acronym used?
The name KDNR means Democratic Republic of North Korea and has been given by one of our friends, a mosaicist, whom has been living in Berlin since 1988 *(I guess the use is a bit obvious-O'Malley).*

What is experimental to you? Do you consider your work with KDNR experimental?
The term 'experimentation' does not exist as, in our opinion, all or almost all has been obtained (in the field of natural sound, above all). Our music can be defined as a group of sensations, humours in relation with cosmos, deriving from our reality and daily experience and in connection with the fact also that our minds do not accept the rational distribution of the day during 24 hours any more. Resuming what has been said above and in commercial points of view, KDNR can be can be considered an 'experimental' or 'industrial' group, but we connect it to the definition of 'pure' as all the musical purposed subjects are obtained through the elaboration of natural sounds that we create 'live' without the use of DAT systems or samplers, or similar electronic instruments. The only concession we make of ourselves is the use of delay and compressors to give more potency to the different sounds.

The unusual use of vocals on the 'Diorda' CD really caught my attention. Please tell us your intended result from their use, and introduce us to Stephane Santini/S.F.C.R, whom you have worked with.
KDNR has always tried to create a 'pure' sound, a sort of hypnotic depth of satisfaction, devastation and anxiety at the same time. The use of the voice of Minako Okada, a lyrical Japanese singer, has given more thickness to this concept.
The French label S.F.C.R. has been interested in our works since 1990/1991, when it produced 4 tapes (2 double cassettes) from skrool (a nightmare synthesis) to 'witness' survival research through 'inside' and 'integration', we made a logical route through the instability of the human being.

How would you express KDNR in a purely visual sense? Is their an underlying moral or emotional foundation to your work with this project?
In the few performances made, KDNR has shown the blindness and the neurosis, due to our system, and the search of a kind of silence. Of the single, not not always desired, through a return to the origins (the use of natural sounds and fire) of the group and the public itself. Public is repeatedly incited and/or struck with the use of these sounds and the body motion and movement. It becomes the active instrument of the performance by acting on the 5 senses and therefore on both the conscious and unconscious.

'Diorda' is packaged in an unusual way, what is the purpose of this? How does this relate to the material which is presented on the CD?
The essentiality of the metal (see the poor art) represents the meagreness and mediocrity of daily life.

Tell me of the roots of the KDNR project and how you have grown it from that point.
KDNR was bord as the project of mail-sound. After different changes with the members, it stabilized in 1990 with the couple Sandrini and Cesena (mime) whom founded this set of sound-thought-physical performance. The group has been completed by M. Okada (vocal), Conti (contacts), Bortolotti (electrotechnician), Berzieri (mix), to have the possibility of performance once again. However KDNR is not a musical group, but an idea or maybe a joke.
The physical-psychic-emotional attack is not always the same, due to the structural instability of the group.

Define your impression and relation to the ideas of law and chaos in nature, expression and in wave electronics.
Chaos? Order? Laws? Or normality. It would be better to ask Leary *(too late-S.).*

What is your impression of the powers of physical sound on human perception? Do these ideas have any relation to KDNR, if so, in which way?
KDNR makes live performances, even if we consider KDNR a sound system in particular environmental structures, where the emotional power and the circular sound strike the public with continuity and progression. In fact, we prefer smaller rooms for this reason. Interactivity and interchange with the public are our peculiarity to transform all into something live and direct.

Please define the message of KDNR in one phrase.
Substance or None. KDNR does not want to be a sound revolution (it would be too ambitious for our modest resources). KDNR wants to be what people don't believe is existing in our reality.

*Uncomplete productions: "14*SK" SFCR (2xK7), "To Testify" SFCR (2xK7), "GH 87/82" OEC ?, "Play" KDNR+OEC (7"+K7+VHS), "Diorda" OEC (CD)*

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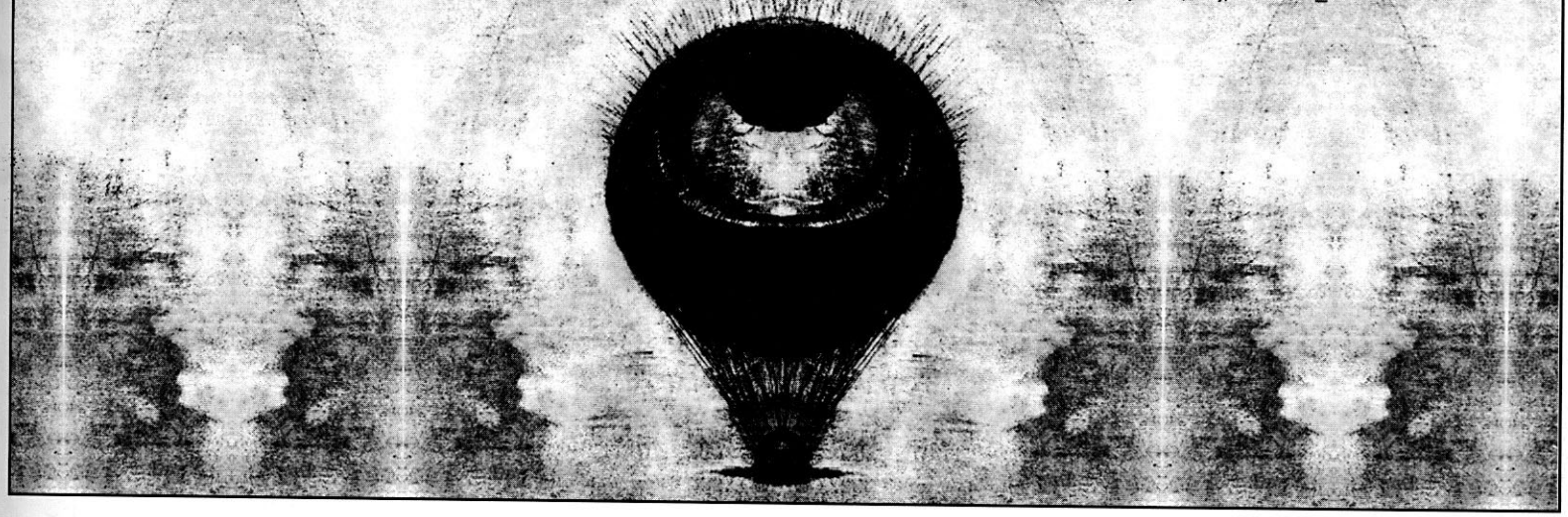

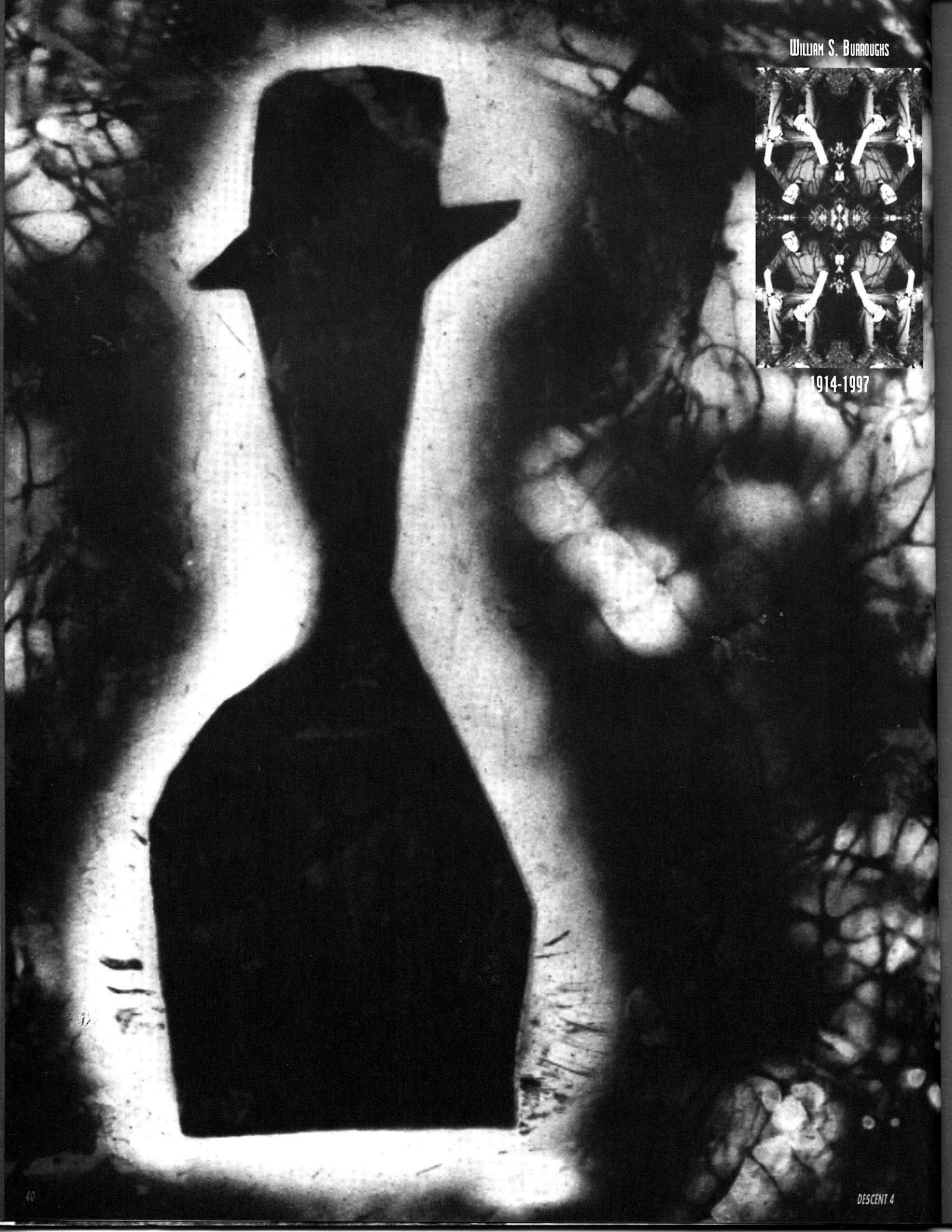
William S. Burroughs
1914-1997

Plecid

PLECID remain as obscure as ever. AJNA released their "I" album over a year ago with small fanfare, although it was very appreciated by many disconcerning folks. PLECID send you through a mental mindflip of soothing and sleepy sounds yet this audial opiate does hold its surprises, with it's extensive arcane roots and unusual paths... Tyler spoke with a representative from the group about thought and ties.

A history of PLECID as a musical division of The Plecid Foundation...
Plecid Foundation is the English translation of the name of a German crafts guild established in the mid-Eighteenth Century during the great transition from the baroque to the classical period. Mozart was involved, but Bach was more of an essential spawn. The word 'plecid' means extreme devotion to intense beauty. The Plecid Foundation still exists and operates today without glitch from the time of its inception. Three years ago in America I made a point of tracking down Plecid Foundation Magus Eugenaestheticus David Woodard, known for his religious military compositions. The old man is alive, apparently healthy, and I had the good fortune of spending the afternoon with him at his house. Woodard's incredibly ominous, diabolical marches and fanfares have been a powerful source of inspiration to me since I was a kid. My parents used to play him religiously (my father was in the CIA). They were worried about my unhealthy interest for a while and were trying to hide them from me! They eventually gave up. I can find anything. But every once in a while somebody- usually on the elderly side- comes up and tells us that a PLECID song reminds them of a Woodard fanfare. I cringe. Is it really that obvious?

What is the Plecid quest? Is this quest the same zenith envisioned by The Plecid Foundation? And what is the entity named The Plecid Foundation?
The Plecid Foundation is a lot more regimented and fascistic in their approach to aesthetic perfection, collaboration, work, life. I'm sure they would never approve of our music because they would perceive it as pandering to a degenerate listenership- melancholy, ethereal, evading real confrontations and concerns of the soul. One can taste their necrotic ferocity in Wagner's "Liebes Tod" or Woodard's "War Prayer". PLECID, on the other hand, is just a dream-induced rock group nobody's ever heard. Hypnosis oriented, more instinctively quiet, pitch black, pure darkness produced on whatever we can get ahold of, versus all of that fiery, vengeant, devilish sort of darkness characteristic of actual Plecid Foundation magisters and their orchestras.

If PLECID were to be manifested in human form, would it be the angel? And what about the Plecid Foundation?
Yes, precisely correct.

The press release wonderfully describes your 'I' CD, but very few have seen the writing I speak of. Could you brief the uninitiated with a new interpretation.
I'm afraid I number among the uninitiated in that regard. The music comes post-suicide from Helen Claire Kay. Her indescribable beauty and intelligence passed through to form the recordings which comprise the first CD.

For the first time listener what would you conceive of as the appropriate environment for the seduction to occur?
Warm and dry. Dark and cozy. Deeply drugged. In the absence of anyone over 20.

Please give us PLECID's visual, emotional and physical components attributed to the colour purple and it's application to the 'I' CD.
Don't know. A fleeting idea laden with just enough conviction to pursue. Some say purple is the colour of the soul, others suggest it's the colour most representative of the frustration in females. Others still bother to note its use in royal settings. Our use of purple metal foil on the cover of PLECID probably subconsciously derives from the ancient symbol of the grape. "A land which produces fine wine not coincidentally also produces great culture," said one Nineteenth Century Plecidic magister. All three of us are avid wine enthusiasts who enjoy pondering this thing Great Culture.

Can we detect a theme, aesthetically and visually with your releases, as was the case with the cassettes?
Certainly, the first CD, PLECID, was recorded within a couple of months and conceived and executed as a whole, is a song outlining the basic emotional contour of psycho-orgasm. Hence, it's precise dark, orgasmic death spirit. The listener is unavoidably affected by it's consistent, recognizable, yet generally arcane atmosphere of orgonomic deathgasm. On the other hand, 'The Truth Detective', a collection of primarily instrumental music culled from very varied recording sessions over a period of two years, is thematically concerned with the state of aboveness, ie., perpetual psycho-orgasm. 'The Truth Detective' is the first and only CD featuring a lengthy recording of the Feraliminal Lycanthropizer in the background. The FL is a powerful subsonic sinewave generator, of "thanato-auric wave generator", as its inventor, Dr. William Jenkins, described in 1923. Very difficult to track one of these down, as they've been desperately suppressed by the CIA for decades, officially used only in military applications. ...In case you're unfamiliar with it, subjects in the presence of the FL invariably do and say things they would never otherwise allow themselves to do or say- like take off their clothes in front of strangers and offer to reveal secrets, or rape and murder. But it's been found particularly useful in the realm of interrogation. A nearly universal human response is that of uncontrollable, free-associative babble. Whatever a person is hiding most tends to emerge first- regardless of who is monitoring and how self- incriminating and immediately self damaging such bearing forth of the truth may be. It's as if the language and motor centers of the brain, in becoming epileptic, cast control entirely aside. One feels a golden euphoria, complete openness and total communication with God, while to insensitive onlookers one might appear rabid, depraved, insane- and, of course, totally vulnerable and unguarded. So long as one is mindful enough to avoid the presence of deceitful persons with petty, manipulative agendas, the FL is the machine of the gods. Richard Wagner would have managed to get one.

Please preview 'The Truth Detective', the new album, for us. How does the 'The Truth Detective' compare to 'I' and will the next PLECID offering be equally as diverse?
'The Truth Detective' involves entirely different instrumentation, for one thing. Cello, violin, handcrafted statics, Feraliminal Lycanthropizer, homemade percussion instruments, analog synth and a lot of effects but especially a thick, slow Oberheim phase shifter. The next PLECID offering should remain secret for now for various extremely valid reasons.

I perceive an imminent feeling from some songs on 'The Truth Detective', or could one also call it a pinnacle, a peak, or a climax?
I know what you mean. Tristanism is Wagner's technique of using longsuffering harmonic irresolution and false resolutions that only lead to further irresolution to express the ominous wonder and grating uncertainty of human existence. In the case of 'The Truth Detective', a timbral, as distinct from merely harmonic, Tristanism pervades the work, so that not only what the instruments are doing and where they're going harmonically resonates with our deep uncertainty, but also what they are is frequently up in the air like in a flying dream.

'The Truth Detective' seems to be less bound by conventions of time. Would you agree?
Yes, definitely. Hence, the clock plasma. We have literally hundreds of hours of completely produced recording sessions on tape which I'm very happy with and which for the criteria of 'The Truth Detective' perfectly with one exception- their endings. Their flight from the boundaries of time make them impossible to end, and when you force an ending, however subtly, it sounds forced. So the pieces chosen for 'The Truth Detective' were the ones which truthfully possess the substance of an eventual ending. When a piece ends, it ends like it should end.

How do you condense time into a mechanical apparatus?
Turn it on and overflow with pleasure.

I know PLECID has performed live in the past. Set the stage, if you will, as to what a PLECID show would address and the response from the participants. Does PLECID have any plans for a live performance in the near future?
Yes, and we're rehearsing. More details when together we all arrive at that mood we're used to reaching separately in staggered steps on separate trips to the onion cellar.

Your use of the Feraliminal Lycanthropizer brings to mind another mind-altering machine- the Brion Gysin Dreamachine. Have you ever experimented with one, especially in connection with recording music?
I have yet to encounter a Dreamachine, though admittedly I have strong doubts about its actual effects and potency. It has the crusty flavor of obvious literary anarchist hoax. If the Dreamachine really produced a waking dream state and had potential to induce suicide, obviously you'd run into them at parties constantly. I'm sure they cause some sort of pulsing, vaguely psychedelic visual, but personally I know I wouldn't be musically inspired by an annoying lightbulb flashing in my eyes. Our house is pitch dark 99.9% of the time. If light is absolutely necessary, as in reading, dining or changing records, we carry small candles so as to minimize obstruction of the total darkness. This living environment may strike some as childishly necromantic or what have you, and that's fine. It so happens we strongly identify with children, romance and ruminations about death. Moreover, our house inspires us musically, so no doubt our penchant for atmosphere and decor is unerring.

Can listeners feel the effects of the Feraliminal Lycanthropizer by listening to The Truth Detective?
Yes! and you will see what I mean when you play it loud. Lock up the dangerous weapons.

Reveal one of the ultimate truths and, diametrically, one of the ultimate lies.
The secret is the secret./ The secret is hidden.

What holds the future?
Pure energy

Contact PLECID via:
THE AJNA OFFENSIVE, POB 11741, Olympia, WA, 98502, USA

the Feraliminal Lycanthropizer

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LABEL SPOTLIGHTS

Interview with Cult German Black Metal label Malicious Records

This interview with the German Black Metal label Malicious Records marks the debut of our label spotlight features, where we expose a bit more about the best real underground labels from across the planet. Malicious has brought us records from MORTIIS, GORGOROTH, DØDHEIMSGARD, ZYKLON-B, and more recently AURA NOIR and BORKNAGAR among others. It is our commitment to support these obscure deliverers of cold art and spoke with the boss, Gerrit Weiher about a few things...

Please tell us about your decision to birth Malicious and the events which led up to it's creation. What purpose and responsibility does Malicious hold as a label?
The black metal scene was very weak when we started as a record company and felt to support it with all the energy we had, since we extremely stand behind the whole concept ourselves. We had been in contact with many people then... also with Mortiis whom had just left EMPEROR and who sent us a tape of his new thin, which we all know today. It came that we released the first single of VOND and the single of the distant Norwegian Black Metal band STRID. After that the first full length albums of MORTIIS came out and the rest is known I think. It was an extremely fanatic and extreme time and a lot had happened especially in Norway, but also in Germany. Well, Malicious Records, Black Metal, and the whole concept around are the most important things in our lives and we try to keep the label alive as long as possible.

There were several setbacks in Malicious' early days with the releases. Can you tell us about the problems you had in the early days, and when it turned around?
Yes, with the first releases we had economic problems, of course. With some of the following records (for example the first DØDHEIMSGARD and VOND) we had problems since the whole working process to finish the covers and etcetera was far too unprofessional. The economic side since has been very good though.

The ZYKLON-B caused perhaps the most problems of all as it stepped into a legal realm, correct?
I guess I don't have to explain what ZYKLON-B means and I think I do not have to explain further that Germany is extremely paranoid and so on. We faced some problems due to the name. It started in 1995 when the cops confiscated some MAYHEM LPs ('Dawn Of The Black Hearts') at the customs due to finding them offensive... they messed up our offices and of course saw the records of ZYKLON-B and VOND which resulted in some problems. We have been questioned a lot of times. They try to prove that we are responsible for a lot of church burnings in Norway since the Norwegian government sent the German government some sort of paper in which they ordered the German government to arrest us. They thought we make influence on Norwegian Black Metal people when we spread Black Metal, etc. They know that we have been in contact with Grishnackh and Euro, Faust, Samoth and others. Things like these made hassle but we did manage to get this shit away and just pay some cash in the end. They never did find proof that ZYKLON-B is offensive to people but we are not allowed to sell the VOND album any longer. Still, ZYKLON-B has been boycotted by many wimpish distros resulting in not so good of sales in Germany and other German speaking countries.

What can a band reasonably expect from Malicious and what do you expect from your bands?
We expect from a band: a)professionalism, b) total dedication to their music and concept, c) seriousness between labels and band and other important matters like these. We do give back the same, and other important things such as paying everything for the band, high royalties, our best support, promotion in the biggest and in the way that the band wants, etc.

You've inked a distribution deal with Metal Blade in Europe (and also more recently IRS/Last Epitaph-Stephen), a label which has erupted a bit of controversy with their signing of ANCIENT. Does this mark the end of the underground era of Malicious? What level do you desire the label to achieve?
I do not think that we were underground before this deal. We try the best we can to get bigger and to professionalize ourselves. If we could sell half a million records we would do that. We do not have this incompetent, extremely naive and stupid opinion to sell only five records to be true. I wonder who the fuck came up with this stupid shit. We do the best we can to bring forward what we stand for and what we say and as you know this is highly possible through music as music has always had a high influence upon the listener. The more people we reach and the more we sell, the better. I do not care if they have released ANCIENT or not. They do have a better distribution than many other distros have and reach more shops and likewise, we reach more people through them, which is what we are striving for.

With BORKNAGAR you have left the trademark Malicious black and white metal aesthetic. Does this also mark a change in path for you and the label? What is the soul of the label?
We will always have a clear face and structure and that is Black Metal records like we have done them so far. BORKNAGAR is first class supreme art and we really have an excellent relationship to all people involved in the band and do really appreciate the concept. I am positive that there will come more albums like this but then they will be all still dark and supreme, that is sure.

We are now seeing the re-emergence of thrash onto the underground metal scene, something it seems Malicious is partially responsible for. What are your predictions for the future of extreme metal and are you moving away from your Black Metal ethics? How important is the Black Metal lifestyle to you?
As long as groups like GORGOROTH, DØDHEIMSGARD, DARKTHRONE, EMPEROR, IMMORTAL, BORKNAGAR,etc. exist we will not move purely into a thrash era. I think it is great when bands like AURA NOIR start to play this extremely great black thrash. I do not think we would move far away from the Black Metal ethics if we would only release albums like these.
We do really like the old bands and if bands today perform this style I do only look on it as positive, but I'm negative that this will be the new trend. We did release and will release stuff like that since we do really adore old bands as SODOM, DESTRUCTION, BATHORY, KREATOR, SLAYER and do enjoy it when newer bands do this in the same black way like AURA NOIR, even if it is not original. It is just the feeling and the music which counts.

What to expect from Malicious through latter 1997? What do you expect in general for that time (a reborn German metal scene?)?
We have just released the debut from KAMPFAR (Nor), the second albums of both DØDHEIMSGARD and AURA NOIR... coming soon is the third album of GORGOROTH titled 'Under The Sign Of Hell' and also the album of DESEKRATOR, the second band of Infernus (GORGOROTH), and some other fine releases. I don't know what else to expect in 1997 but at least no reborn German metal.

MALICIOUS. POB 21 04 08, 72 27 Tubingen 21 Germany

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Interview with German Powerelectronics Label L.O.K.I. Foundation

L.O.K.I Foundation were very pleased to bring us some very dark substances in the guise of acts such as INADE, WOLVERINE, and PREDOMINACE. They have definitely caught our attention (and ears) over here at DESCENT. Pure dark art is what the extol, we spoke with them about a few other topics as well.

What led you to decide to initiate the L.O.K.I. Foundation and please provide us with a historical view of L.O.K.I.
After a time of experimentation, manipulations and untitled works we decided to initiate LOKI FOUNDATION in 1991 as a base for ours and allied works. First formations published on LOKI were INADE, DAGDA MOR and IRON YOUTH. Several tapes, in mostly limited editions, have seen the light of the day during the years 1991-94. As a result of various correspondence we have later produced the 'White Ashes' MC and 'Obliteration' LP from PREDOMINANCE and the 'Chapter' MC from WOLVERINE. Close to the lines of the FOUNDATION stands also the German project TURBUND STURMWERK. In fact of that we have released their glorious LP in 1996 and the recent 7" named 'Der letzle Sieger ist der Tod'.

What does L.O.K.I. represent and what functions does it serve?
For some labels or bands it seems to be quite cool and good for selling their CD's in higher quantities to list their more trifling music under the phrase "Supreme Nordic Art", or such. This is rather laughable than serious for us. Of course, LOKI stands in direction to the same Nordic god, but this has nothing to do with the omnipresent abusing of the Nordic mythology. We use that in reference to the symbolic character of that figure, not more and not less. The FOUNDATION will work every time in a incalculable, paradoxical and controversial way. We are absolutely not interested in appealing to everyone's taste. In creating such points of confrontation you can reach the people that think about the releases, also when it's possible that some are misunderstanding the real message.

Power And Steel is an off shoot of L.O.K.I. Are there others and what is the theory behind the different entities?
In 1993 Power And Steel was built as a side label from LOKI. The releases are specialized priority in the noise and experimental avantgarde sector. There is no big difference between both labels, but working in that way is easier for us to co-ordinate the releases.

You started out your label with cassette releases but have branched out into CD's and vinyl. Why the change of approach and which formats do you prefer?
Normally we see no problems in releasing tapes. The people are no longer interested in that medium. Today nobody expects a good reproduction on tape. They couple that with the standard of demo recordings. Surely this is a stupid fact because some recent CD releases are much worse than the one or other five year old tape.

All in all we prefer the nostalgic vinyl as a format for our productions.

What can a band on L.O.K.I. expect from the label and what do you demand from your acts? What do you look for in a release, in a band and in presentation?
It's very difficult to produce a work which is not sinking in the flood of today's CD/LP releases. That's why we are attaching great importance to transformation with every release, a specific and outstanding idea. We expect subtle and innovative concepts behind the music, and not only "just fun~" recordings. When we agree with a work then we are troubled to give the best possible presentation and artistic freedom.

How has the growing popularity of power electronics and noise in general effected your approach to music and releases?
We do not believe that the works of the FOUNDATION have something to do with the general popularity of power electronics. In 1981 THROBBING GRISTLE declared their mission as dead for the reason that their sick and morbid music became popular. But today permanent new formed projects attempted to be popular with producing similar sick music. That seems to be quite a paradox. Of course there are existing some very good powernoise projects which decree a constant and very good potential, but they are even only a few. On the other side you have lots of groups whose names and music is very easy to exchange between them.

What music excites you recently and which forms of music do you feel a dissatisfaction with?
Certainly we enjoy all forms of good produced industrial music. Only to name a few we think the works from SCHLOSS TEGAL, Daniel Menche, ANENZEPHALIA, LUSTMORD, THROBBING GRISTLE and SPK are based on a very high standard. Neo-folk music and metal we don't like very much. It's exaggerated to say that this is junk, but these forms of music coupled with their permanent repetitions are not hitting our taste.

What can the throngs expect from L.O.K.I. and it's other manifestations in '97?
In the next months we are preparing the LP from the German COLUMN ONE. This project is known from the collaboration with Genesis P. Orridge. At the some time we will release a new 7" from EX. ORDER. Both records we will do on Power And Steel.
Later this year are new works reserved for LOKI from INADE, PREDOMINANCE and TURBUND STURMWERK. Regarding these releases we have no details yet. So, watch out for the new strikes from Saxony!

LOKI FOUNDATION. PSF 10152, 08272 Aue/Sachsen, Germany

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Interview with Italian experimenters Old Europa Café

OLD EUROPA CAFE are perhaps one of the most interesting labels to me at the moment. Although their release schedule has encompassed a vast variety of electronic sounds, there is a common thread throughout, one without boundaries of extremity. It's all here. I interrogated Father Rodolfo from Pordenone.

Please start off with the beginning of the label...
OEC was born in the early 80's over ten years ago! I started running the label after a collaboration in a very innovative Italian group/project whom did a great LP "XX Centvry Zorro - La Volpe Du XX Seicle". For many reasons I left this project and started the label concentrating more on the production than on doing sounds myself...
I must say that during all these years OEC was growing enormously from a small tape label to a very well known experimental Post-Industrial label, I've produced until today over 100 tapes, 8 videos, 2 LPs and 9 CD's and still have higher goals in mind!

Which might be your favorite release up to this point then?
The release which I'm most proud of is still the next one I'm going to produce! Without this faith a little label like OEC , which is at last me alone plus the help of Lilian, should be dead for a long time.
Anyway, I can divide the OEC productions into 2 main fields: a) Post-Industrial, Power-Electronic Noise... and b) Esoteric, Magical-Ambient. The 2 fields are very different among them but I feel that one is completing the other one.

It seems that you have grown quite a lot in only the past 2 years or so...
Yes, I saw growing a bigger interest around OEC from 1996. In my opinion it is because of 2 reasons: a) OEC was coming out with a series of interesting CDs in the last 2 years, turning in this way to a more professional (even if still very "underground") label, this format is more requested than tapes.... and b) Effectively the whole "scene" is growing a lot, especially in middle europe (mostly Germany), Japan (for Power-Noise) and USA there are many new mags specialized in this new sort of sounds plus more and more festivals and live happenings... of course this helps!

Can you say that there is a particular style which you release?
I think and hope that the large part of the artists are free from any fashion or trend and will follow their own artistical way. If I think to all the artists which I was releasing on OEC, on one or the other way all of them had their own style and personal feeling and taste for sound or noise!

Alright, well, what can be considered some common themes then?
I think that all of us are completely involved with violence and magic. Violence is in all of us, and magic too... it's still time for a new war! Maybe the more current one... and mankind is still looking for divine or magic inspiration and hope or power. For instance, again two quick considerations: a) Mass control through well planned information in the era of "communication" is today a normal thing and high "science" and high "technology", what do you think this is???... and b) The catholic church is 2000 years old... a very large religious organization. Many people during the last few years, also in Croatia where a real war is still alive, fall into very mystic and tranced states telling about visions of the Blessed Virgin Mary! What do you think this is??? *(err... -S.)*
Violence and mystic are a great part of our existance, are pure energy, something you don't see in mankind, just something you will feel. I don't tell you what to do with this great energy but never forget this power!

You seem to be slowing down on the tape releases now.... changing direction a bit (format-wise). Can you explain about this, and what are you planning for release in the coming months?
I'm slowing down on the production of tapes but I will still release a few of them each year in extremely limited editions. Videos are also something I love but are not simple to release... so I will slow down also on this kind of production, by the way remember that the third and last part of the video trilogy "Macrocephalous Compost" is after long wait ready, a great compilation, the right shot and stimulation for your eyes and ears!
I like to concentrate more on the CD and vinyl format, I'm going to release a series of CDs which are tendentially more involved with Esoteric-Ethnic-Ambient sounds and a series of vinyl discs which are dealing with Dark-Power-Noise. We have the following planned: HYBRIDS/NEBULON "Clavis" CD, ENDURA "The Watcher" CD, BAD SECTOR "Void" CD, CONTAGIOUS ORGASM CD, DECA CD, NEGRU VODA CD, SIGILLUM S "Tidal Surface Tension" LP, DEATHPILE/ DISCORDANCE "120 Days of Sodom" split LP, MERZBOW/THE HATERS "Milanese Bestiality/Drunk on Decay" split LP, AUBE LP, NECROFILIA LP, CON-DOM LP, LAW LP, RUNZELSTIRN & GURGELSTØCK "Blüten und Kotze" cassette, RICHARD RAMIREZ "Uniform Scene" cassette, SARIN cassette.

So have you yourself been involved with any musical groups?
Yes, I was involved in some acts with other musicians 3 times, the lats one was KALTE HAUT BRENNENDES FLEISCH but each time everything was ending not so good... I am working on a new project SEELENLÄRM (German translation of "Soul-Noise" or better "Spirit-Noise"). At the moment everything is at an embryonic state, I even don't know how this new experience will develop.

Lastly, Italy seems to be quite prolific in the number of labels and bands emerging from the electronic foundation, what do you think about this?
I agree, in Italy we have many great new Post-Industrial and Esoteric-Ambient acts plus a series of good independent labels releasing this kind of sounds, but unfortunately we don't really have a large audience for this kind of "culture" here in Italy. I'm anyway very active in the production of many of these acts and still feel a large interest for the Italian Post-Industrial scene which I must say is still growing in the rest of the world. Bless you, amen Father Rodolfo Protti.

Old Europe Café, Viale Maconi, 38, 33170 Pordenone, Italy

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Interview with German Post-Industrial Kings TESCO

Doubtless we could see Germany's TESCO Organization as ideal and standard of modern Industrial Culture. Barely an insight behind the scenery was offered to the general public so far, many people are proud to count records of GENOCIDE ORGAN or THE GREY WOLVES among their own, but who's really acquainted with the persons behind the label? State-Art reported and Klaus answered.

TESCO nearly exist since 35 years, first we devoted on the sale of food, later we started with various charity campaigns, in favour of demonstrations to hurt police horses for instance. With the 80's we discharged the food chain to her independence, sold our shares but we still get 1.5% of their monthly sales. Since this time we devote towards a label and mail-order in the sound carrier sector. For us, TESCO is the essence of Industrial Culture of the 70's and 80's, music that effects very subliminally, which one can't withhold from and lead to actions, unrestrained consumer compulsion in stores, for instance. TESCO refer to the cult that TG let revive, we feel belonging to this way and go on with, evolve and vary, but conserve it.

No, he won't fool us, the name TESCO originates from the English chain of shops... Industrial monopolized as it were. Mailorder and label are carried by Klaus Hilger and Joachim Kohl, and all releases get planned and realized by both of them, despite different domiciles. Why do they handle TESCO this way and is it possible that one or the other doesn't agree with certain releases or publishing?
Everything gets planned, financed and realized united. Logistical seen, in case of the different domiciles... marching apart, striking united. Since we are individual persons it is quite possible that one gets more fancied to the release than the other, but if it does suit by no means it gets cancelled, what thoroughly happened. In resonance one could always find something he won't do again. Same passes for distribution, everyone covers a certain sector.

The label distinguish of generally high quality and demanded

records, how do you develop all packages in collaboration with other projects? And do you see a certain friendship to these projects as important, or does only music play a part?
Package-technical is up to the bands, we advise and realize it. Except for a few bands, all bands take way of their coverdesign very serious. Sometimes we brood over months about the realization of only one single project, then when it means: here some pictures, my music and now do it. Music stands of course in the foreground, but the thing that's represented and how it's represented is important for us as well. Friendship could surrender but is no must, we get on well with the most bands, there are some exceptions like INTRINSIC ACTION, the relation turned here during the years from very good to very aggressive. Other bands are simply musically not of interest any more, they sold themselves and the mass of their releases possess no or just a bit of quality. They've sold like cheap whores and spread their legs on each label.

Respecting TESCO's very expanded distribution, they have close contacts to other labels over the world, with a more or less good relationship. Are there labels who doesn't "smack" you distribute yet?
Labels that doesn't smack exist in heaps, but nobody force us to establish a close and deep friendship with them. A merely commercial relation could exist nevertheless, in this case labels are secondary, we're only interested in their releases. Distributors like Semantic (France), Sonic Rendezvous (NL) or AWB/Bloodlust (US) can't restrain us to believe in the human evil, this way we won't get disapointed, surprised at most. This sort of wankers are all over there.

Functional Organization could be seen as a sidelabel, so far you've more or less re-released old Sound Source tapes like ARCHON SATANI's "Virgin Birth", BDN's "Slaughterhouse", or MENTAL DESTRUCTION's "When Madness Strikes", but also rare materials as CON-DOM's "All in Good Faith" or CD versions of TESCO releases, etc. Is Functional; a label for re-releases only?
Functional is not only specialized on re-releases and will bring quite new stuff too. Re-releases of old, rare tapes were just the beginning, actually it is our intention to form a counterpart to TESCO's large-scale productions, simply functional... The next CD is DAGDA MOR :The Border of the Light" *(Already released-S.)*, which is such a case. This CD contains unreleased material and live recordings, no re-release but normal packaged and not really new material, therefore not TESCO.

Did you already had problems with constitutional matters? Especially the cover-poster of THE GREY WOLVES "Punishment" LP would have caused constitutional guardian's attention, your "Projekt Neue Ordnung" Compilation LP got confiscated at that time. Do TESCO or Functional try to mediate a certain ideology or strive for an object?
As already mentioned we came in friendly touch with the authorities, the SEK (Sondereinsatzkommando= special task command) were assaulting our rooms and confiscated everything. VA "Projekt Neue Ordnung" wasn't sold at the time and they got around 80 copies, which we got back including all the other stuff after four years. Subjects were violence glorification, violence representation, proclamation for genocide, formation of a criminal unity and distribution of this whole. That solved of course. TESCO itself mediates nothing, our releases speak for themselves partly, we have other possibilities to spread our own views. TESCO as label has to remain neutral, each of us has his own meaning of course, but to set it as maxime of the label would be wrong. Personally we make no secret of our views.

TESCO is a very time spending hobby and surely doesn't leave you any free time for other things. But what do you besides in private or vocational?
Free time, what is that? HE did work until the end of last year for the tax investigation department of Baden Würtemberg (German Federal State), until our intermezzo I have been in a police unit for guerilla resistance, since then I'm in a funeral home, where I'm still responsible for the crematory.

Label as well as distribution is a very big and important term within the Industrial scene, still the whole world orders at TESCO. Does the fact to have a name and to be important part of the scene fulfil you with a certain pride?
Proud on TESCO, the label and it's bands for sure, at last our influence specially in Germany is not to deny. But concerning the status you carry too far! The whole world... tomorrow perhaps! So far nobody from Peru, Kampuchea, Bolivia, Kenya, or Chile answered. Since Mobuto is shaky, our connection to Zaire got worse as well.

Finally we'd like to know your future plans?
TESCO propose a lot: GENOCIDE ORGAN 2LP, LES JOYAUX DE LA PRINCESSE 10", VA "TESCO Disco" 4CD with INADE, ANENZEPHALIA, CON-DOM and THE GREY WOLVES, OPERATION CLEANSWEEP CD, ANENZEPHALIA 12", GREY WOLVES CD and CON-DOM 2LP, but who and when will do that still is written in the stars. Functional will have more place, after DAGDA MOR there is some silence

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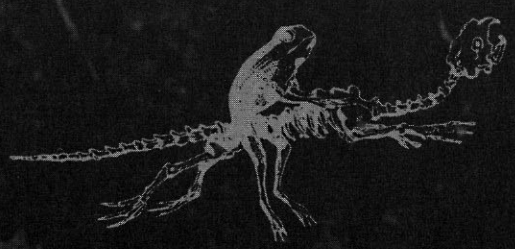

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The Moon lay hidden beneath a Cloud

The medieval runs deep within the sounds of this excellent group, whom originates from middle europe. The essence of authenticity is undeniably strong, an impeccably accurate fusion of modern electronic and traditional music themes. Quite appropriately, the title of this project can also be applied to the people behind it... those whom bring us this magickal music, whom have also been hidden by a mysterious cloud. They stepped out partially to let us know more and we are very pleased to present this rare interview which was loaded by Wren, amended by Tyler and polished by myself...

Please momentarily lift the cloud which hides the moon so to give your entranced listeners a however brief glimpse (or a complete divulgence of) whom the enigmatic creators of this medieval opus are. Does anonymity present freedom?
We, Alzbeth and Albin Julius founded THE MOON LAY HIDDEN BENEATH A CLOUD in 1992. Since the we have released 6 CDs - on some of them we have been supported by friends like Lina Baby Doll (DEUTSCH NEPAL, with him we also recorded a MCD), David Gibson, or Alan Trench. Of course anonymity presents a certain freedom, but for us naming our personages is not that important as we rather see the importance of the music itself rather than who stands behind it.

There are obvious strong semblances and deeply intriguing sense of spirituality when meditating on these arcane, euphonic, yet haunting incantations. What are the main sources of cultural mythologies, spiritual creeds, or pagan beliefs which you most naturally relate with or which compelingly inspire thee?
We don't declare ourselves to anything but the strength of the individual. Personally we don't feel any need in running after a certain confession or ideology. We're against each from of religious oppression and conversion. As the Christian and Islamic churches were some of the most oppressive institutions in European history it's only a logical consequence that we're against them.
Nevertheless we're against all monotheistic and totalitarian confessions and religion itself. Rituals, grown from nature, are much more earthbound, realistic and native, not artificial and forced as with monotheistic religions.
We have big interests in pre-christian European myths, but rather from a cultural point of view than from the religious side.

As I understand the whole of the medieval era to be a grim yet behoven time of despiritualization through the ascension of humanities' to be "unlimited" torsioned power over the once revered earth. What is the prioritized significant aspect of this period which TMLHBAC conveys when conjuring these authentic soundtracks to this chronological theme? Is there an allegorical message to promote spiritual awakening (or even social political awareness) through using the middle ages as a predominant basis for your music?
We're both occupied with all aspects of medieval life - music, literature but also with the circumstances of life of the normal people, but we don't see it as a predominant base for our music.
We agree with you that in the middle ages the spiritual honour against earth turned (very slowly and over centuries) into, as you said, "torsioned power" over earth. But this was mostly propagandised by the Church, that turned the natural grown respect of the people for Nature into the subject of mankind, Nature had to serve us. This increased during the last Century, when we developed the skills to rape the Earth.

TMLHBAC powerfully conveys presence at the ritualistic site through the musical construction of individual tracks such as "The Plague Procession", "The Witches Begirt The Cauldron" and so forth. To what extent have you musically studied or trained to successfully grasp the theory of medieval composition? Are there non-electronically performed instruments used? Please give us an idea of your general musical background.
We use electronic equipment (such as sampler, tape loops and effect processors) as well as acoustic and also medieval instruments, such as shawm, hurdy gurdy, rebec, recorder, dulcimer and percussion.
We like a lot of different styles of music - industrial definitely is something we're into, but also a lot of classic, medieval and Alzbeth, our singer, is also into Metal.

War is a dominant force which is a foundation for the inevitable. Certain excerpts or songs appear as militaristic marching recitals invoking glorious visions. To the victory of whom or what are you exalting in this case?
There's no victory.

The transparent banality of socially conditioned human relations are never really challenged or questioned. Supposive intimate relationships revolve around meek insecurities and restrictive emotions. Friendships revolve around mundane obligatory greetings and material interactions. In your experiences, how were such falsehoods of community remedied? What is your reflection of the frivolous love that today's society has smothered itself within?
Each person has to make his own decision how to cultivate his social relations. You can't always make the society responsible for everything, be awake!

As industrial music seems to be the relative backbone of a portion of your material, what is your connection to thew apocalyptic reality of decaying machinery that shapes, almost biomechanically, many of our declining cities?
If it was decaying it would be inspiring. But as there's the tendency to erase everything decaying and invest into new stuff there's no more freedom to decay, no more "romantic, melancholic grief". We're more touched by the melancholic, morbid side of decay, what we find here all over Wien.

You have recently worked with other artist, among these DEUTSCH NEPAL. The outstanding results on both ends made me wish to inquire further about this collaboration. Perhaps an elaboration?
We already worked on some songs together with DEUTSCH NEPAL which we plan to release as MCD, that will fulfil the first issue. There are also some other plans that are not to be mentioned yet.

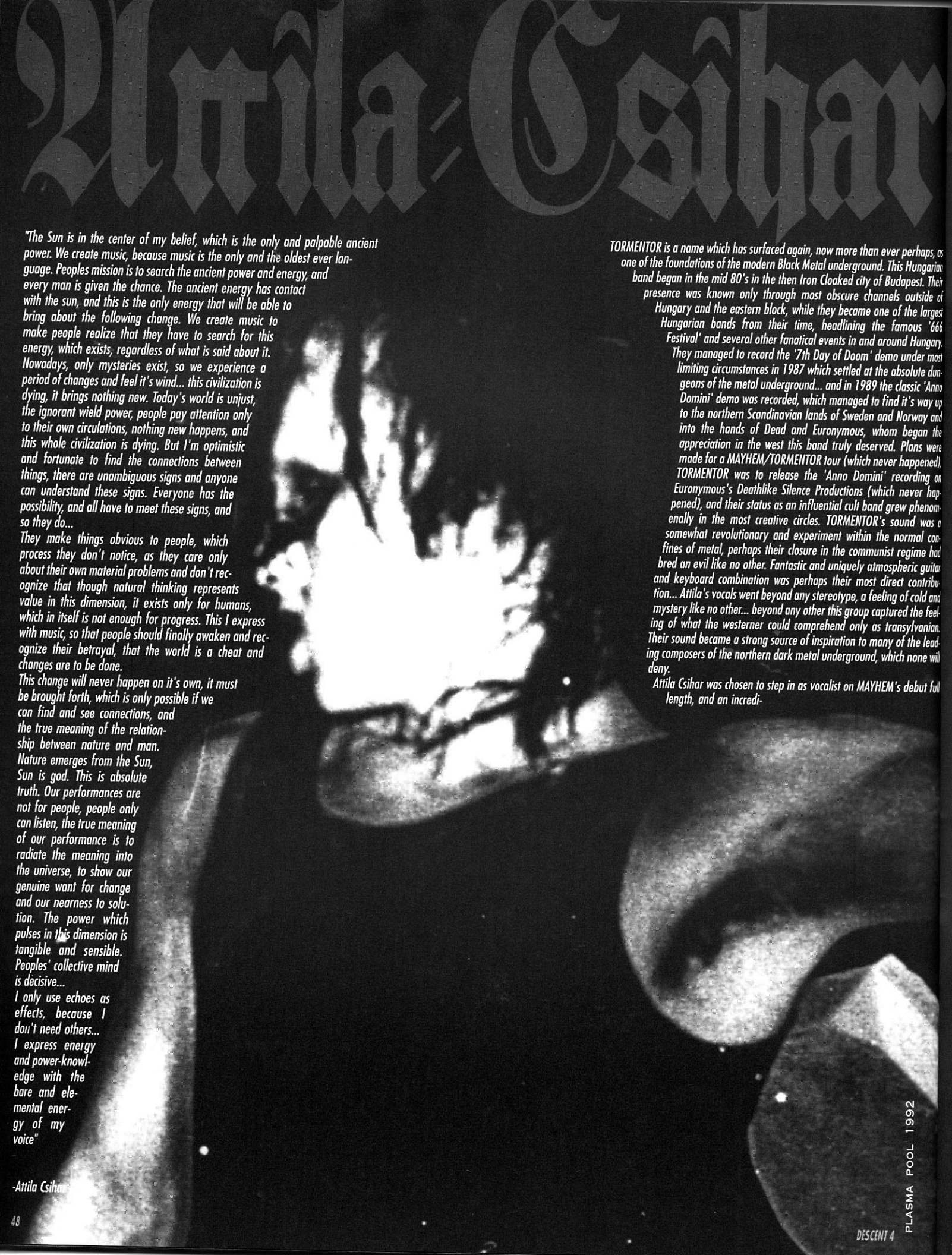
Is it fairest stated that you honour not only the bulk of the physical with regards to resolution? Also your opinion on the benefits/misfortunes of superstition?
This is only for weak people.

Lastly, do you consider your work cyclical, continuing to develop from and beyond the initial recordings? What does the current phase of past/present/future hold in regards to you and TMLHBAC?
Of course our personal phases do influence our musical work, but also we can't really foretell what will come in the future. Of course we hope that our work develops, there's nothing as boring as repeating yourselves.

Discography:
The Moon Lay Hidden Beneath A Cloud CD 1993 (ART 1)
Amara Tanta Tyri CD 1994 (ART 2)
A New Soldier Follows the Path of a New King CD 1995 (ART 3)
Yndalongg 10" 1996 (ART 4)
Kostnice 7" 1995 (ART 5)
Were you of Silver, Were you of Gold 12"/MCD 1996 (ART 6)
Madhr (with HYBRIDS) 7" 1996 (ART 7)
A Night in Fear (with DEUTSCH NEPAL) CD 1996 (ART 8)
TMLHBAC presents "Der Blutharsch" Picture LP 1996 (ART 9)
Picture 7" 1997 (ART 10)
The Smell of Blood but Victory CD+MCD Box 1997 (ART 11)

Arthur's Round Table, POB 33, 9432 Walzenhausen, Switzerland

Attila Csihar



"The Sun is in the center of my belief, which is the only and palpable ancient power. We create music, because music is the only and the oldest ever language. Peoples mission is to search the ancient power and energy, and every man is given the chance. The ancient energy has contact with the sun, and this is the only energy that will be able to bring about the following change. We create music to make people realize that they have to search for this energy, which exists, regardless of what is said about it. Nowadays, only mysteries exist, so we experience a period of changes and feel it's wind... this civilization is dying, it brings nothing new. Today's world is unjust, the ignorant wield power, people pay attention only to their own circulations, nothing new happens, and this whole civilization is dying. But I'm optimistic and fortunate to find the connections between things, there are unambiguous signs and anyone can understand these signs. Everyone has the possibility, and all have to meet these signs, and so they do...

They make things obvious to people, which process they don't notice, as they care only about their own material problems and don't recognize that though natural thinking represents value in this dimension, it exists only for humans, which in itself is not enough for progress. This I express with music, so that people should finally awaken and recognize their betrayal, that the world is a cheat and changes are to be done.

This change will never happen on it's own, it must be brought forth, which is only possible if we can find and see connections, and the true meaning of the relationship between nature and man. Nature emerges from the Sun, Sun is god. This is absolute truth. Our performances are not for people, people only can listen, the true meaning of our performance is to radiate the meaning into the universe, to show our genuine want for change and our nearness to solution. The power which pulses in this dimension is tangible and sensible. Peoples' collective mind is decisive...

I only use echoes as effects, because I don't need others... I express energy and power-knowledge with the bare and elemental energy of my voice"

-Attila Csihar

TORMENTOR is a name which has surfaced again, now more than ever perhaps, as one of the foundations of the modern Black Metal underground. This Hungarian band began in the mid 80's in the then Iron Cloaked city of Budapest. Their presence was known only through most obscure channels outside of Hungary and the eastern block, while they became one of the largest Hungarian bands from their time, headlining the famous '666 Festival' and several other fanatical events in and around Hungary. They managed to record the '7th Day of Doom' demo under most limiting circumstances in 1987 which settled at the absolute dungeons of the metal underground... and in 1989 the classic 'Anno Domini' demo was recorded, which managed to find it's way up to the northern Scandinavian lands of Sweden and Norway and into the hands of Dead and Euronymous, whom began the appreciation in the west this band truly deserved. Plans were made for a MAYHEM/TORMENTOR tour (which never happened), TORMENTOR was to release the 'Anno Domini' recording on Euronymous's Deathlike Silence Productions (which never happened), and their status as an influential cult band grew phenomenally in the most creative circles. TORMENTOR's sound was a somewhat revolutionary and experiment within the normal confines of metal, perhaps their closure in the communist regime had bred an evil like no other. Fantastic and uniquely atmospheric guitar and keyboard combination was perhaps their most direct contribution... Attila's vocals went beyond any stereotype, a feeling of cold and mystery like no other... beyond any other this group captured the feeling of what the westerner could comprehend only as transylvanian. Their sound became a strong source of inspiration to many of the leading composers of the northern dark metal underground, which none will deny.

Attila Csihar was chosen to step in as vocalist on MAYHEM's debut full length, and an incredi-

ble performance resulted, helping create one of the strongest milestones in black metal history. By this time TORMENTOR had split up and the members had gone in varying directions, the most notable being Attila's PLASMA POOL, a step into a more common direction of industrial/gothic music, very close to earlier SKINNY PUPPY in some ways musically, but Attila's vocals bringing it all back into obscurity. Several recordings and gigs were made, but in 1995 this too split apart.
By this time in 1997 we have finally seen the proper release of 'Anno Domini' through Samoth's Nocturnal Art Productions, a compilation of various PLASMA POOL recordings (titled 'I') has been released through the Italian Holocaust Records, and the '7th Day of Doom' is also set to be released on CD through them later this year. In 1996 we heard rumours that TORMENTOR had reformed with a new keyboardist (which never happened)... in reality Attila has moved on to a different realm once again with HIMILAYA and now BABA, an atmospheric and complex project. The cult lives.
I had the opportunity of an interview with Attila himself which was graciously conducted through my friend Luigi Coppo in person in Budapest in early 1997.

To start this Attila, I was curious to know the meaning behind what I read upon the HOLOCAUST Records news on PLASMA POOL regarding the band, that is «...there's a long road from BATHORY to SKINNY PUPPY...»? Do you find it as simple to categorize your music into these ranks?
Holocaust Records of Italy has done a great work on the 'I' CD, more than I was expecting. The sound is very good, due to an excellent remastering job in Milan at Elettroformati (also where '7th Day of Doom' is to be remastered). The choice of tracks on the CD is a good cross section of what PLASMA POOL was and the many stages we passed. The long road from BATHORY to SKINNY PUPPY... well, it's just a sentence. It could be easily exchanged with the long road from TORMENTOR to PLASMA POOL, because the music of the forementioned bands is totally different, and the personal changes I went through during those stages really has something to do with it. It's an intelligent statement! Besides, I think Vámosi Tamás said it *(Tamás is/was the PLASMA POOL/TORMENTOR 'manager' or, more accurately, contact with the underground. He didn't play in either band-S.)*!

PLASMA POOL... It seems the history of this project is a bit shrouded in mystery. I know you have done a few demos, but can you explain things a bit clearer in reference to this project? What was the main inspiration for creating PLASMA POOL and is that the same inspiration that drives you to create under this moniker today?
PLASMA POOL was formed in 1991 in Budapest and all the members came from different musical backgrounds and experiences: I from TORMENTOR, a Black Metal band, Kuni Laszlo, the drummer, from the nazi-punk scene (from a brutal hardcore combo called FEGYDERN) and, Zihaly, the keyboardist from psychedelic music... where he was composing alone. It's true I was listening to a lot of SKINNY PUPPY material, an extraordinary band that seems to have sadly disappeared. A lot of people in Hungary love SKINNY PUPPY, I began listening to them in the mid-eighties, but 'The Last Rites' is my favorite album. Now Trent Reznor seems to be the inventor of industrial-techno music but SKINNY PUPPY made the same things about ten years ago! As PLASMA POOL we tried performing some PUPPY's covers live. PLASMA POOL was essentially a live band, you see, we went to every corner of Hungary to play... although in live gigs I was still wearing the corpse-paint as you can see on the CD!

How did the deal with HOLOCAUST come to be, and are you satisfied with the label so far? PLASMA POOL have entitled their debut «I»... what is the meaning of this title?
It's really a long story... in the past PLASMA POOL made a deal with the Hungarian label Trottel Records of Budapest (1991). At the beginning Tamás Rupaszov, the boss of Trottel Records, spread some tapes around Hungary of PLASMA POOL... although only with an average sound. Then interest from two Italians became apparent (Coppo and Figiaconi) which found a deal with Rupaszov, which was the release of 'I' through Holocaust Records. I only found out about the CD later, but I am pleased everything has gone for the best as you can see. 'I' is just a symbolic name. It could be interpreted as 'first coming' or something more personal... a very simple title... but a great one.

TORMENTOR
You must know that in TORMENTOR's era the 'Iron Curtain' existed over Hungary. I was very young when I started to sing in TORMENTOR, only 16 years old (I'm 28 years now) and the whole of the TORMENTOR story is a long one... it was a bunch of boys whom started to make music inspired by BATHORY, DESTRUCTION, POSSESSED, VENOM and so on. The music just came spontaneously, in the first demos there was some thrash influences from METALLICA and EXODUS... we were a five piece by that time although another drummer played on the demo. By the time 'Anno Domini' came to be it was a much more exciting time for us. A better golden age. Szigetti wrote the music and I wrote the lyrics. We were all listening to METALLICA, SODOM, SLAYER, ANNIHILATOR, CELTIC FROST and so on, but as a band, TORMENTOR was trying for it's own identity... and I think we succeeded in doing something different than had been attempted before. You know what I mean? Later Budai Tamas left the band... or rather we kicked him out, and then Szigeti took control of the band. We were at the the height of our success in Hungary and then we split... sad but true, but that's life I suppose.

Speak of the live performances of TORMENTOR and PLASMA POOL.
We played several gigs in Hungary, and some successful ones, especially in our hometown of Budapest. Everyone wore the corpse paint and trappings according to the Black Metal fashion. I dressed as a maniacal lobster (or a monster-crab)... yes, it was a glorious period and we had some great live acts in the past, from what people are saying. PLASMA POOL was a different story, a live show with some sort of morbid projections and visuals... not at all a metal show but more technological. There was a short live video tape of PLASMA POOL which has been made, but I have yet to see...

Elizabeth Bathory.
Erzébét Bathori 'The Countess of my Fire' was a mighty and cruel Hungarian character from legend and history. The greatest serial killer of all time. I did draw much inspiration from the stories surrounding her, especially around the later period of TORMENTOR. My wife Nora is going to have my new daughter soon... maybe her name will be Dorcia, haha *(already has happened and it ain't Dorcia-Stephen)*! It's difficult to explain the PLASMA POOL lyrics on the other hand... my reality was by that time distorted by some substances. However the last two tracks of the CD represent the final recordings of PLASMA POOL. The titles are in the Hungarian language: 'Elsiettett Témetés' translates 'Premature Burial' from a novel of Edgar Allen Poe and 'Toma Baj' means a certain type of mood... it is curious how someone at the label was thinking of Tampa Bay (Florida) and the Voodoo *(Too many BRUTALITY albums I guess-Stephen)*! Maybe those songs were in more of a Cold Meat direction than the previous material... Zihaly wrote 'Tompa' around a strange middle-ages melody.

Was there a certain turn of events which led to Samoth releasing the 'Anno Domini' recordings? So what has happened with the other members from the TORMENTOR era?
No, when Samoth and NAP released at last the 'Anno Domini' we had just had a telephone discussion together, nothing big at all. But NAP has done very good work with the release, I am again pleased! As for the other TORMENTOR members: each are still playing in some other bands... Attila Szigeti has a blues based band for example. I've started my own project after PLASMA POOL now *(First HIMILAYA and now BABA-Stephen)*... that is the truth... everything has it's correct time, don't you agree?

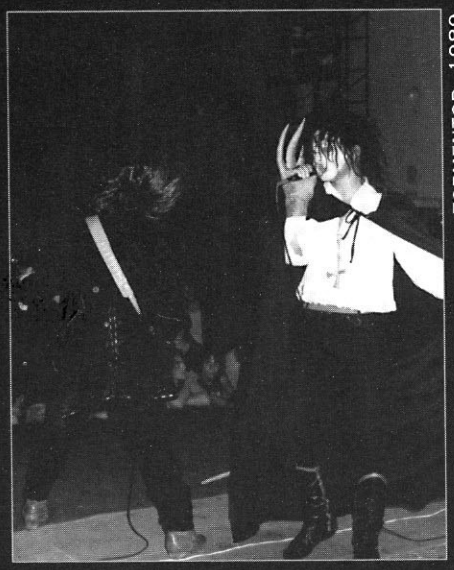
So, about '7th Day of Doom' and the history around it? What is the 'Transylvanian Damnation' release?
The story of '7th Day of Doom' is a frustrating one. It was recorded in 1987 with a very poor budget (about 200 DM) after which I gave the master tape to a friend of mine. Later the master was stolen, but fortunately I had made a tape with good sound from it. It is this which will be the foundation for the re-mastered edition which will be released through Holocaust this year. 'Transylvanian Damnation' is a live video made by our good friend Vámosi Tamás from Pécs... he is the editor of the 'Transylvanian Damnation' zine and really helped out TORMENTOR and PLASMA POOL a lot in the past. I have never sought to see any profits through music... I believe that if this is your goal of playing music you should instead change professions. By the way, maybe you know the first guy whom was looking for TORMENTOR's music from outside eastern europe some years ago... it was Dead from MAYHEM!

MAYHEM.
There are no problems to tell you that story. When Euronymous called me to sing in his band I was really amazed, I went to Norway for just a few weeks with my wife Nora in the spring of 1993. I was singing in PLASMA POOL by that time and MAYHEM was something so musically distant from me. I remember them waiting for me at the train station: Euronymous was wearing a black cloak... yes, he was a dark man, as dark as the night with now moon, and he was very short and stout. Vikernes was waiting for me with an iron-mail cloak like a Norse viking, the other guys, Blackthorn and Hellhammer were more normal guys. Vikernes was driving the car and listening to very fast and hard techno stiff (tu-tu-tu)... it was actually Vikernes

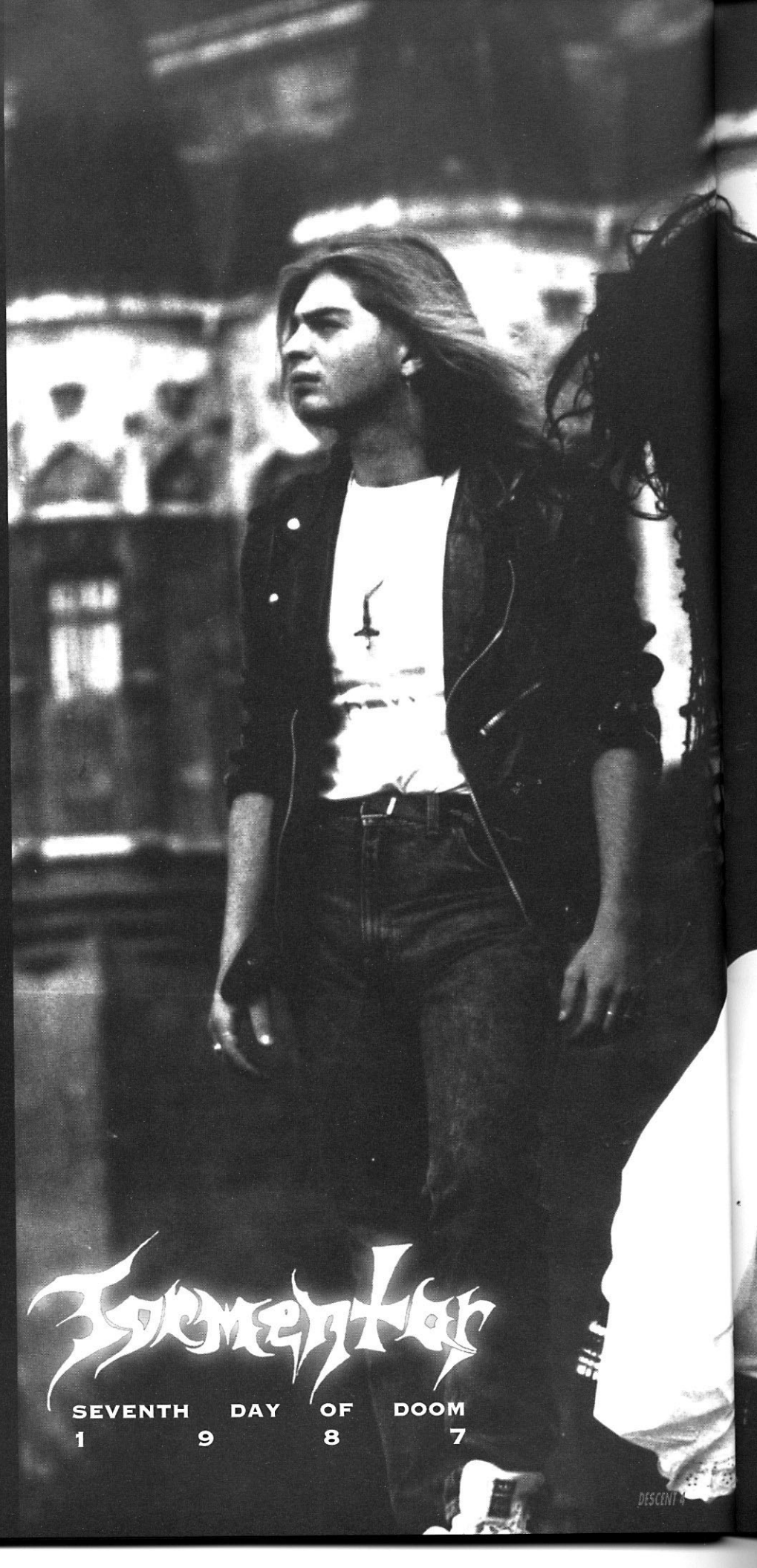
whom originally wanted to put PLASMA POOL on CD. We went to Euronymous's apartment in Oslo which was full of Satanic symbolism... yes... pentacles, inverted crosses but I wasn't impressed because in TORMENTOR I was into that sort of demonic stuff. By that time I saw absolutely no sympathy between Vikernes and Euronymous. After a few rehearsals in Oslo we went to the studios in Bergen by Vikernes's car, I stayed at his house with his parents... I remember them as nice people... it took about three days in the studio for my singing on the MAYHEM album (I changed some things but all the songs were already written by Dead and Euronymous). I remember that the third day was only for the song 'De Mysteriis Dom Sathanas', the more difficult song... unfortunately the time at disposition was too little. Euronymous explained to me how he wanted me to sing... yes 'a demon flies'... I can do everything I want with my voice so... They were great musicians, Euronymous and Blackthorn were playing their guitars very well and Vikernes was a very young but good bass player, very professional as well... Hellhammer was incredible on drums! Only my face ended up appearing on the album. I am a wolf... it was because of the black magic between Euronymous and me. Snorre had written some new songs slower and darker than before and it was Euronymous's idea to play and record them in an open space among mountains, into the nature...
Then I returned to Hungary after a good time in Norway and in the late summer a friend of mine told me about the murder of Euronymous... at the beginning I was thinking about Dead's suicide but when I read Hungary's Metal Hammer I understood everything. I'm still sorry for that and I have still some good memories of them. What happens happens but they were very nice people to me and my wife, especially Snorre... I remember they showed me some copies of magazines with the church fires for they were quite proud of them but I didn't care. Thus my involvement as singer on the 'De Mysteriis Dom Sathanas' album... well, I still love that release.

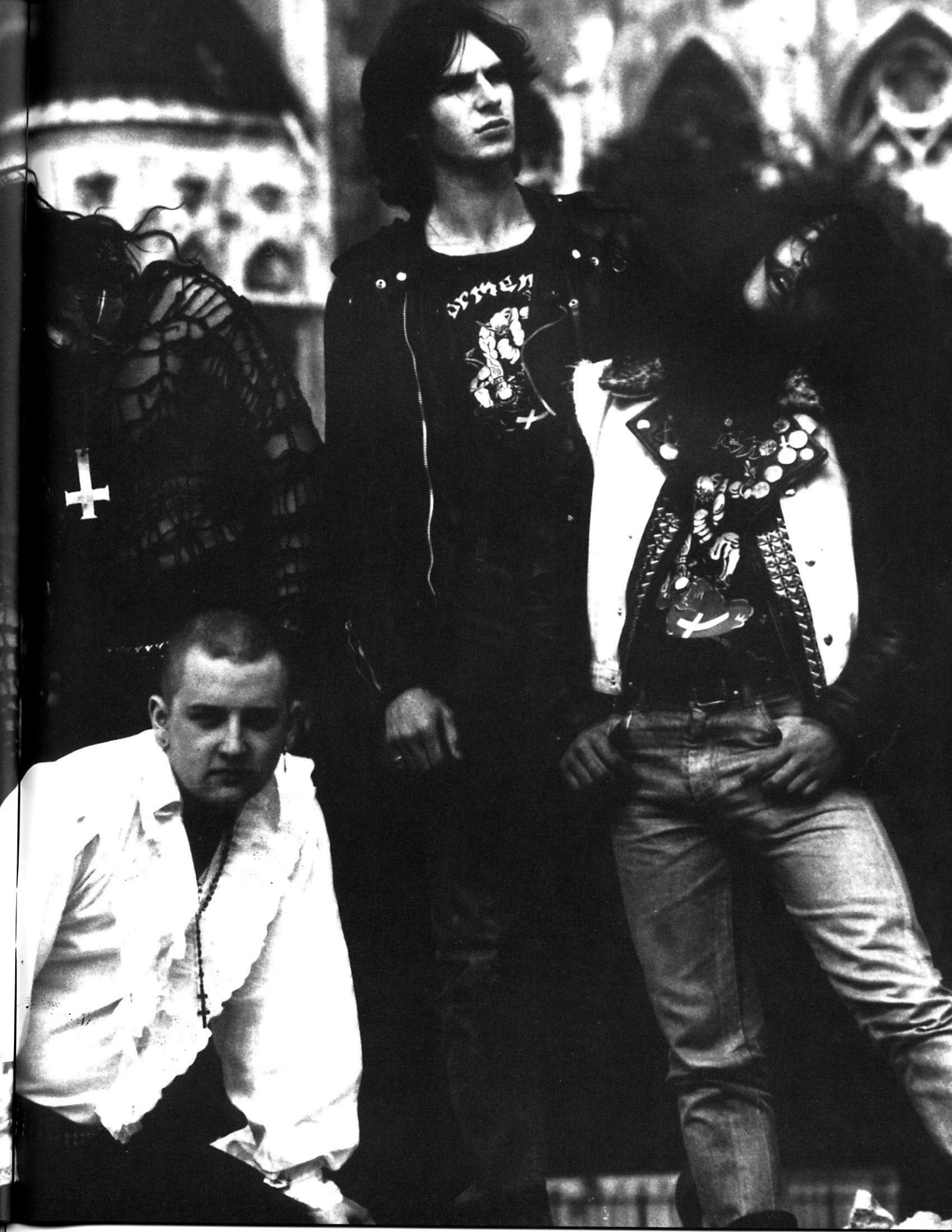
How do you feel to be a Hungarian? Do you feel pride?
Yes I am proud to be a Hungarian. I have read many books about the history and some ancient legends and traditions of my country. Transylvania was part of the Hungarian nation in the past and still today many Hungarian people are living there. It's a magical place with a strong middle-ages atmosphere. The castle of Countess Bathori (Csejthe) was placed in the area of today's Slovakia, at the boundary with Hungary in the 'Small Carpathians'... she has been a great and intricate historical character, beyond only a simple serial killer.

To end this?
TORMENTOR was TORMENTOR, MAYHEM was MAYHEM, PLASMA POOL... ok, all the members of the band took a lot of heavy drugs during the period of PLASMA POOL's existence. The music of PLASMA POOL is a kind of lysergic music... in those days, because of drugs, I found myself on a lonely island far away from reality. I think some drugs like LSD or Mescal are quite good for meditation without abusing them... but by that time I was thinking of suicide and then one night I just woke up. I found Nora and with her I made a son, Arion... and now a daughter. I have a new musical project now... and the story goes on... I'm not really interested in the other bands anymore... they all belong to a legend in the past.



TORMENTOR 1989

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TREVOR BROWN

TAINT gets up close and personal with this notorious Japan based artist

Could you describe some of your earliest work, including work done for FORCE MENTAL, R&D GROUP 28, COUP DE GRACE etc. Would you like to see any of this earliest material reprinted - especially the R&D GROUP publications? I especially like the Peter Kurten collages and 'comic strips' that were published in FORCE MENTAL. Have you done anything similar recently, especially in strip form?
I contributed to a few fanzines in the 'industrial' boom of the eighties and, as you know, i was involved with R&D GROUP 28 who put out my first photocopied booklets of drawings alongside APOCALYPSO A-GO-GO, a booklet on Rudolf Schwarzkogler, indexes of Charles Manso and THROBBING GRISTLE archives, and so on. APOCALYPSO A-GO-GO was one of the seminal zines of that era - a law flaunting tapestry of cuttings, hard core pornography, etc (so inevitably it ran into trouble with UK customs) - it acted as an encouragement for me to do my own crude masturbatory artwork - mostly smiling girls with added abuse - black 'n' white line drawings. I wouldn't like to see that stuff reprinted now. But i'm still doing similar work - still doing photocopied booklets of obsessive drawings. I don't have the patience to work on a comic strip as such though.

Do you recall the very first piece you did for a band or publication?
I think COIL's 'Hellraiser' 10" was the first record cover i did.

Could you describe the illustrations created for the SODALITY publication INTEMPERANCE? I assume this will never be published. Know why?
One of many unrealized projects of that same time. Peter Sotos was also lined up for this non-starter. Over ambitious or just incompetent i don't know. I wasted time doing illustrations based on de Sade's '120 Days of Sodom'.

Why did you use the pen name GRAPHIC AUTOPSY? Besides the set of S/M postcards, were there any publications published with this name? You once mentioned a 100 page booklet titled GRAPHIC AUTOPSY - was this ever published?
Rock Wilson of APOCALYPSO A-GO-GO came up with 'GRAPHIC AUTOPSY' as the title for my first photocopy booklets and i adopted it in the latter eighties as a pseudonym for a while just to differentiate personal stuff from my 'professional' work in graphic design/advertising. This wasn't really necessary so i soon dropped it. The first two released GRAPHIC AUTOPSY booklets were 60 pages each - there was also a 100 page book but we (R&D GROUP 28) did copies for ourselves and close friends. I think just the silk-screened 'S/M' greetings cards were put out under the alias GRAPHIC AUTOPSY.

The painting of the skull/angel for the 'Hellraiser' 10" by COIL is completely different than anything I've seen by you before, was this work your idea or COIL's? Also the cover of the COIL magazine published by R&D GROUP 28. Are you still friends with COIL?
The cover for COIL employed an unusual technique and i think it's the only published work i used it on. The image was my idea but COIL were very pleased when they saw it ("inspired and desired" were there exact words if i remember correctly). John Balance helped a lot in finding Japanese contacts for me but i never had much contact with COIL themselves actually. I still try to keep them posted now and again about my activities (though wonder how much of it gets through their administrative barrier). I've always had much respect for their work.

Early material still: What does BZ mean and what's the content of the Japanese introduction and was it written by you or the publishers? How many were created? They look much, much better in EVIL.
I hate having to give things titles. BZ was randomly chosen and had no significant meaning - perhaps short for 'bizarre'? I later learned it was the name of a poison gas in World War One or something (...also a Japanese pop/rock band). BZ was 'published' by a Japanese noise cassette label guy around 1991 - 69 (photocopied) pages of bondage drawings packaged in a plastic bag - my copy doesn't have any 'introduction' but one could have been slipped in when it was reprinted? - you'll have to show me. Of course the drawings look far better when printed properly as in my book EVIL. BZ is interesting though as it chronologically covered 3 or 4 years plotting my growing interest in Japanese bondage. Right now i'm doing some colour pencil drawings for a Japanese web site, KIKKOU, which aims to introduce Japanese bondage/SM to a Western audience.

Do you know any of the fancy Japanese rope tricks?
I can't even tie up a parcel tightly!
I was invited to attend several meetings of the KINBIKEN bondage group here in Tokyo which features the staggering expertise and artistry of Chimou Nureki - the leading master of ropes in Japan. Masami Akita (MERZBOW) has worked as a video-cameraman for them for many years (besides being very well read on such matters) - and, judging by one of his TRUE ROMANCE performances I saw, even he was fumbling with the ropes when tying up this girl (i'll get lambasted for saying this - sorry Akita-san). It's really far more difficult than it looks.

How did the move to Tokyo come about? Could you speak or read any Japanese before moving? Can you recall what your reactions were the first few weeks of living in Tokyo? What's the area of Tokyo you live in like? And the best/worst things about Tokyo...
I'd always been fascinated by Japanese stuff and England was a dead loss as far as my work was concerned. I didn't know any Japanese but fortunately found a nice Japanese girlfriend so by the end of 1993 had left England far behind me. The first weeks were exhilarating and bewildering - impossible to describe. All of Tokyo is an incomprehensibly cluttered labyrinth of little streets, shops, vending machines, pachinko parlours, neon signs, bicycles, cute schoolgirls etc etc. Too many good things about life here to begin to list them - perhaps the best is just feeling safe. The worst thing is that everything's in Japanese! (but even that's nice for me - on a visual level).

Has the artwork for the LIVE/EVIL book been returned? What did you do to try to get the artwork back?
What didn't I do to get the artwork back! Another noise cassette label guy. Another time wasting parasite. This book was to have been a B4 sized limited edition collection of my pre-Japan work. Mostly i just sent photocopies but did loose a bunch of colour transparencies of paintings (some unreplaceable). Things like this piss me off greatly - and it continues to happen depressingly frequently.

How did the piece for DEICIDE come about? Was it originally supposed to be for the front cover? Did you know of DEICIDE before becoming commissioned?
Mostly thanks to Michael Moynihan (ex COUP DE GRACE now BLOOD AXIS-STORM-FERAL HOUSE - maybe a name known to many readers of this anyway) - I knew of DEICIDE when i first heard they were interested in me doing a painting for them so felt quite awed. Also doubtful - CANNIBAL CORPSE had previously fucked me around on a cover - but eventually Glen Benton of DEICIDE called me (referring to CANNIBAL CORPSE as "those pussies") outlining his wild dissecting Jesus image idea. Although not a fan of the music i did quite respect this guy for the strength of his convictions. Originally the painting wasn't intended for the cover - he'd already promised that to this other artist - but after seeing my original he changed his mind - this resulted in months of arguments with their record company/management and the compromised new cover illustration. It achieved the desired amount of fuss and extra sales anyway. Though it has done nothing for me - they even took away my copyright on the image!

How did you meet the people behind TOO NEGATIVE? These are the same people or person that published EVIL, correct?
The meeting with 'TOO NEGATIVE' was very opportune - occurring at a time (mid 1994) when i was seriously questioning continuing what i was doing. I was fed up working for shitty SM people (unreturned artwork, lies, snobbism, acerbity...) and similarly fed up with the deficient 'underground' scene (the LIVE/EVIL fiasco being the final straw). I saw copies of these Japanese sex mags called ORG and SPIRAL which were decidedly different in look to the majority of such books - slipping in european porno, tattoos, the unusual artwork of Taga Shin, freaks and other bizarre stuff. The books were nicely produced and as the publishers (TOM SHOBO) also seemed to have offices in New York i wrote to the editor sending sample of my work. They called back a few weeks later fixing an appointment for me (and my wife) to go and see them. And, well, it was clear from the start that this was beginning of something big - we were there for hours swapping tales of our hatred for the rest of the SM scene etc. The editor Kotaro Kobayashi, was planning to close down SPIRAL and making a new bimonthly publication purely concentrating on all the bizarre shit, dead bodies and suchlike - TOO NEGATIVE! I was offered as much involvement as i desired - at the minimum a regular section of my work in every issue. Being such an uncompromising project we never really expected it to last long though, but six issues were published before it came to an end. I guess Kobayashi got tired having to justify the book to the TOM SHOBO boss (from whom it was half-hidden from otherwise it'd never have gotten off the ground).
Kobayashi was also wanting to do a proper book just of my work, which TOM SHOBO were balking about. As well as start an art gallery! It sounded like wishful thinking but actually very quickly came to fruition after a meeting with a CDRom company who had acres of unused office space. This was quickly transformed by Kobayashi into the phenomenal NG GALLERY. It opened it's doors 7-7-7 (7th Jul, Heisei 7, or 1995 to you and i) and i've since had two exhibitions there.
EVIL (HEAR NO, SEE NO, SPEAK NO) - the equally miraculous book of my artwork, was published by NG April 1996 and sold out pretty fast. This was a 100 page full colour hard-cover book in limited edition of 1000, signed 'n' numbered. It included everything. It's now become a bit of a collectors item needless to say - the demand far exceeded the print run thanks to a quite wide media coverage, including leading newsstand magazines and even a bit on TV. Most sales were here but maybe about 100 made it out of Japan, almost all to America (only a few at most to England!).

Have the plans for a Trevor Brown CDRom been cancelled? What would have the CDRom been like?
The above mentioned CDRom company were (or still are?) to do my CDRom. Nothing has been started still and personally i'm not that enthusiastic about this media - a book is far nicer unless there's some form of worthwhile interaction. (I get asked a lot about this CDRom - i guess because people have heard WHITEHOUSE recorded a special little track for it).

Please give highs and lows of both gallery shows. Give dates, locations, etc.
The first, titled EVIL, was at NG GALLERY Tokyo, November 8 to 28, 1995. It was very well attended and resulted in TREVILLE (the leading art book publishers in Japan) expressing interest in doing a book of my work (...this has also still yet to come to anything). The second, titled EVIL TWIN, at NG GALLERY again, ostensibly March 30 to April 10, 1996, but extended a further week. The exhibition was to coincide with the release of my book.
I've had a further exhibition in Kyoto at the KEIBUNSHA ART BOX, October 8 to 21, 1996. This has been the most overwhelmingly successful. Both in terms of selling original paintings as well as introducing my works to 'normal' people. The visitors comments books have to be seen to be believed - containing everything from the highest exaltations imaginable ("better than Warhol"?) to what can be taken as death threats ("DIE!")! This has been the only time when i've actually really got to hear what people think about my work.

Has TOO NEGATIVE started back up as ULTRA NEGATIVE yet and will you be as heavily involved?
TOO NEGATIVE has been re-launched under the title ULTRA NEGATIVE by NG GALLERY but sadly this is just a photocopied publication (limited initial copies colour) - it is uncensored at least. Hopefully future

issues will eventually be properly printed. The original posse of TOO NEGATIVE photographers and artists (including myself) appear here as well as new NG GALLERY artists.
TOM SHOBO have also just re-launched TOO NEGATIVE in a dubiously hypocritical move to cash in on the current fascination with the grotesque here in Japan. This closely follows the format and content of the original and they've even numbered it at issue seven - it's actually rather impressive, but a huge insult to Kobayashi.

How did the meeting between you and ALICE CLUB come about? How many issues have you had artwork in? Were they created especially for ALICE CLUB to suit the content? What are the editors/publishers like personally and is ALICE CLUB a total pro publication? Also descriptions of contents (articles, etc).
They called me. I'd had a couple of features about my work in other magazines by the same publisher and ALICE CLUB wanted one too. This became a six page colour article in the January '95 issue and they subsequently asked if i could supply a colour page for every bi-monthly issue, which i've done now for exactly two years. I was a little wary when first offered this work but i needed the money and exposure. And the people at the magazine were very nice - not at all what you might expect - probably none are true paedophiles (at least not in the way western people now view what a paedophile is after the Dutroux case etc) - the editor i dealt with was even female. The magazine is 'totally pro' and legal. Besides the colour photo spreads of under-15 girls there are a wide variety of articles, book/video reviews and information relating to 'roricon' (lolita complex).

Is ALICE CLUB distributed in Europe and have you had any direct feedback due to your work? What kind?
The magazine is not distributed outside Japan for obvious reasons.
Regarding feedback i was about to answer that i'm not that keen to find out what the readership of such a magazine thought about my work - they probably hate it! - but actually i am rather interested (-i get to hear nothing, of course?). So, following this up, in an attempt to elicit strong response i posted my provocative 'Bloodsucker' image (small girl sucking a popsicle dripping onto her white party dress like blood) to the internet pre-teens binaries (pictures) newsgroup read by tens of thousands all over the world (at least if their service provider provides it) - there was no response at all! I also made a series of further posts to other newsgroups with different artworks - and got the same astounding underwhelming reaction.

What sort of problems, if any, have you had due to being involved with ALICE CLUB and your similar artwork? What effect has the Belgian situation with Marc Dutroux and the European crackdown on citizens travelling to Asia for child prostitution had on ALICE CLUB, your work, and in Japan? Especially since 'kp' is legal and the women in Japan look quite young. Does Japan have statutory rape laws? Does Tokyo have very many sex crimes or do a lot go presumably unreported?
Personally no problems at all - people are either really confused or really don't care what i do? Or maybe they truly understand what i am doing? - extremely doubtful! I have now stopped working for ALICE CLUB as I don't want to be categorized as a roricon artist. The Marc Dutroux thing hit the headlines here but didn't result in the sort of reactions now going on in Europe (and America?). It'll take a similar case to happen in Japan before such events occur here i guess. Maybe it'll happen eventually but the amount of sex crime is well below western standards (ahem). Perhaps partly due to magazines like ALICE CLUB being available to appease any kind of sexual frustration? ALICE CLUB have continued to survive the occasional negative feelings about roricon though are always under the threat of closure. I don't think there are any 'sex tourists' as such to Japan - children are not available for sale - and most women that are will not entertain foreigners.

Do you have any idea why Japanese porn is censored but everything else is ok? I've heard that censoring may come to an end. Know anything?
Nope. Censorship is slowly being eroded though (Japanese girls have pubic hair... Wow!).

Are Tokyo porn shops similar to those in Europe and the US? I'd think they'd be much cleaner and not sleazy at all. Adult book stores in the US are havens for homosexuals and whores as I'd imagine the Euro stores are too. Do Tokyo shops have peep booths, viewing rooms, etc? I've been told there are roricon stores and you mentioned sex/death stores.
Yes, sex stores in Tokyo are quite sanitary. My wife said some pervo touched her bottom when we were in this tiny one once - i suspect this was just her wishful imagination though as the guy was squeezing to get past. Kind of curious that there are no peep booths etc here. There are quite a few places specializing in roricon - some schoolgirls make a small fortune selling their soiled panties to these shops.

Explain your involvement with the WHITEHOUSE fan club FANATICS. The piece on the 3" single should have been printed in colour or as a 7" sized sleeve. Does William Bennett get involved with the covers? Or are they your ideas? I've been told that Trevor Brown info has been on the WHITEHOUSE website, are you involved in this or do you plan on creating your own website?
Not much involvement with the FANATICS Japanese WHITEHOUSE 'fan club' besides doing the covers. The cover of the second single, 'Just Like a Cunt', has been expertly printed making up for the weak first one.
The usual process with the WHITEHOUSE covers is William feeding me various nebulous thoughts and cryptic words providing a stimulus for me to form an image - this seems to work well and invariably he'll say i've surpassed his expectations. i still feel under some responsibility doing them - shaping the public image of WHITEHOUSE to some extent - but they're a joy to work on.
The WHITEHOUSE web site i have zero involvement with. It's a completely unofficial site but they're doing an excellent job - i'm very pleased with the page they've devoted to my work so no complaints. AN 'official' Trevor Brown site was started by another guy in England - i've just heard that he's been seriously ill for some time, hence little progress on that site yet. NG GALLERY should also have a page on my work running eventually. I guess one day i'll start my own but not yet-a-while.

Has the French book ALICE IN EVIL GARDEN been cancelled? Why? What is the content of your artwork and the text? Will the artwork be used elsewhere?
Yep, cancelled. Over-ambition and incompetence yet again? This was was to have been a book of thirteen short stories around the theme of little girls, with accompanying paintings by myself. Previously the guy had managed to put out a 7" single with a Trevor Brown painting cover (a small girl holding a machine gun) and this sparked the idea of doing the book - sadly it proved well beyond his capabilities though? (I also heard he was pussy-whipped by his new disapproving girlfriend). Fortunately i interpreted the stories loosely, primarily producing work to please myself, so it was possible to re-use many illustrations for ALICE CLUB. Also some were published by myself as a set of colour postcards.

Have MALEFACT and FUNERAL PARTY been the only US publications to feature your work since the COUP DE GRACE publications? Have you any idea why JUXTAPOZ turned you down? I couldn't imagine them printing your work! Have there been any recent European appearances in anything?
And ANSWER ME!. Yep, that's about the size of it. JUXTAPOZ said they'd be doing something on me but did nothing (ie. chickened out?). They have this delusion that they're at the cutting edge of radical modern art but i think many readers can see it's mostly an old hippy artist refuge. After well over a year of shallow reassurances i asked for my transparencies back in the end - all i got was this snotty note from someone who's probably the tea lady - and no transparencies. Fuck 'em - it's more their loss i think. Europe? - nothing. I'll win in the end - just watch!

Has there been much American response overall?
A fair few Americans bought my original artwork i have to say - it's definitely my number two market next to Japan - some of you over there do seem to appreciate my stuff.

How do you feel about the way the RED STREAM 3CD box set turned out? I pointed out to Pat that he had forgotten to give you credit. I think it should have been printed closer to the size of the box and the background turned out too dark. Any thoughts on the CDs?
The CDs deserve better packaging?! I heard that countless printers were turning the job down disgusted by my artwork - and clearly the printer Pat finally managed to find was incompetent. It's a poor production - i'm happy i'm not credited!

Are the backgrounds of your paintings created first (like the grids and splotchy, 'moody', backgrounds like the ANSWER ME! back cover) then the main subject painted over it? A friend said he has seen the 'Fat Lady With Dildo' in a porn mag and said you probably traced it with a transparency or overhead projector and then airbrushed it. Is this true or was it hand-drawn, which I believe?
Tracing paper, photocopiers, light boxes, join the dots, painting by numbers, even my computer is coming in handy now... anything that makes life easy. The ideas are more important. And the final image.

I've been told that your wife is a model for your paintings, is this true? How does she feel about your work especially the more sexually violent pieces? And the ALICE CLUB work? Has there ever been anything you've done she's objected to?
My wife is an important factor in the creation of my artwork but i'm not about to say exactly to what extent (ha ha!... let the rumours continue out of control). She's never objected to any of my excesses - on the contrary, she's probably contributed to many of them!

Does your work reflect your opinion of women or is it simply an interest in violent sex and the only reason women are used is that you're heterosexual? Would you agree your work is misogynistic, the same way Peter Sotos might agree his work is? Does your interest in sexual violence go beyond pornography and your artwork? Is there any personal involvement?
More misanthropic than misogynistic!? In any case i'd never explicitly state my work is this or that in such black and white terms as i do not think it can be simply defined like that, and it would sway how people look at my work rather than allow them to come to their own conclusions. Here in Japan there's a large female following of my work so that probably cancels out many criticisms of misogyny. (Peter Sotos is shockingly modest about his writing so it's just like him to blithely declare it's just misogynistic scribbling). Of course i'd admit to a lot of it being sexual (and heterosexual) but not 'violent sex' in my opinion.
As for taking my assumed interest in violent sex beyond my artwork - what are you expecting me to say! I think it's the other way around actually. No art is created in a vacuum - you need the influx of information and knowledge from outside experience to produce work with any depth. (Look how many Giger copyists there are - what blank lives these 'artists' must have).

I wouldn't consider your work misanthropic nor misogynist and I find it interesting that Japanese females enjoy your work. As I'm sure you could imagine, if your work was shown in the US you most definitely would be branded a misogynist! Actually, do you get any enjoyment from people reacting so irrationally to your work?
Yes.

What is your reaction to Japanese Trevor Brown fans, publishers, etc that you've met that have alice/medical/freak/SM/death fetishes? Does their interest seem to go beyond photos, videos, etc? It seems it would be much easier to indulge in Tokyo especially compared to the US.

I rarely come face to face with my fans. If i'm approached at all they're very often extremely nervous - firstly i'm seen as this huge cult artist (and possibly insane?) - also 'gaijin complex' plays a large part here, the prevelant Japanese fear of having to deal with foreigners. Quite a number typically seem to be the rarely-come-out-of-their-rooms type to (me too?) - especially noise people - so really they're no threat to anyone. I have met a couple of fans that make me stop and wonder though. A doctor who bought a couple of my originals recently. He's also involved in making music and decorates his product with images of piles of dead little girls etc (manga style drawings)... Also there's another young Trevor Brown collector working in a funeral parlour. He looks very normal, quite handsome my wife says, but he openly admits to necrophiliac sexual obsessions as well as lolita fantasies - 'admits' almost too strong a word, he talks about it as if it were completely natural. The ultimate pleasure for him would be to prepare the body of a dead little girl - he's still waiting for that opportunity...

List any future projects.

Well, sadly as projects by outside parties evidently cannot always be relied upon to come to anything i'll just plug my own projects. The foremost being my plan to publish the next book collection of my work myself - this will be another edition of 1000 - full colour - around 52 pages - a hard cover is beyond my budget though. It'll be a bit more affordable than EVIL (for all you Americans who bitched about the price of that) but as its just going to contain little girl and doll pictures it's liable to displease some people? Titled FORBIDDEN FRUIT i'm figuring on release around September '97. Post card sets i've published have all sold out but i may do more this year as well as occasional photocopied books and special items. I produce a regular monthly newsletter to keep anyone interested up to date *(send some IRCs-S.).*

(My apologies to Mr. Brown for not being able to reproduce his paintings in full colour.-Stephen)

Trevor Brown, 206 Copozoi 4-13-11, Kichijoji Higashicho, Muszshino City, Tokyo 180, Japan

THE GREY WOLVES

THE GREY WOLVES speak for themselves, they're big boys. Tyler stepped up to listen.

Please inform the readers of THE GREY WOLVES and the Cultural Terrorist Network. Are they separate entities or are they invariably coexistent?

THE GREY WOLVES are a hard core electronics unit that have been producing 'mu-sick' for some 15 years. We do not operate in the same way as a more traditional rock and roll type group as the whole pop star thing is of little interest to us. For example, membership in THE GREY WOLVES is a fluid thing... somebody reading this could do an (un)performance using THE GREY WOLVES name and the dis/play would be perfectly valid. What we are interested in is the use of sound and how certain frequencies or noises effect people and why.

The manifesto of Cultural Terrorism was based on an article published in a right wing kkkristian magazine called 'The Plain Truth', basically we reversed everything that was written and The Cultural Terrorist Network was born. The network itself is a very informal thing and is made up of individuals or groups who adhere to the concept of cultural terrorism. It is about attitude, a state of mind, rather than something to do with a set political agenda. I consider that everything THE GREY WOLVES have ever done were random acts of cultural terrorism. It's about standing outside of the norm and viewing all things in an unconventional way and acting appropriately. Cultural terrorism is certainly not a dogma which you can be intellectual about as the whole thing is much more cynical and basic than any other "ism" you would care to mention.

You have been in existence for over 14 (at last count) years now but have only started releasing albums in the last few. Has this brought you a wider audience and does the cassette industry still seem a righteous endeavor? Do you still have a distaste for vinyl?

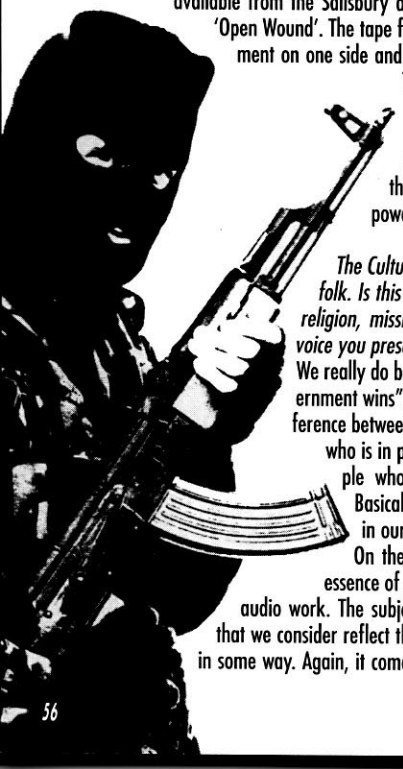
To be honest, the only reason THE GREY WOLVES did not release any vinyl prior to the 'Punishment' LP on Tesco was that we were not asked to. I'm not sure if our vinyl releases have made us any more appreciated by the population at large and I also feel that some of our best releases have been on cassette. THE GREY WOLVES are in no way snobbish (read: Elitist) about which format their audio releases are made on. Cassette releases are usually very quick to get released where as other formats can take weeks if not months. The expense of vinyl and CD releases is also another limiting factor *(for this band anyway-S.)*. I feel that tape labels have an important role to play in that they are more likely to take risks and release music of a more experimental and extreme nature. Music that otherwise may not have been heard.

About distribution, most of THE GREY WOLVES releases can be obtained from the following: Nigredo, 62 Saxby Street, Salford, Manchester, M6 7RG, UK... Tesco, Open Wound, 47 Old Compton ST. London, Wilts, SP1 2BJ, UK. Tesco of Germany also has an excellent distribution network which I highly recommend.

I own a copy of THE GREY WOLVES communique dealing with Manson's trial statements. How does this interest you and is it applicable to your motives? What other broadsheets and communiques have you disseminated in the past?

Manson is still an interest of ours and certainly has some interesting things to say regarding such things as race and ecology. However, Death Metal kids wearing Manson t-shirts and killing chickens or small furry animals in Basingstoke in the name of the family is more than a bit silly and those people have got the wrong end of the stick as far as Manson is concerned (I am sure your readers know the sort of thing that we are on about *(I'm not so sure-S.)*). We are interested in all sorts of extremes and people who consider themselves to be 'outsiders'.

There were several communiques in total, all printed on A5 paper of varying length. They covered a multitude of subjects but are no longer available. Neither is a larger format book we did a few years ago called 'The Grey File'... this covered things like skinheads, Kenneth Anger, and deformities. Still available from the Salisbury address is a booklet and C90 cassette release called 'Open Wound'. The tape features general information on the survivalist movement on one side and the Australian art terrorist STREICHER on the other. The booklet is A5 sized and consists of 64 pages on subjects like fear, putrefaction, and Radio Werewolf. We are always interested in receiving information on the above mentioned topics or anything of use for the information war. Knowledge is power!



The Cultural Terrorist Network seems to ally itself with political folk. Is this something you embrace, and are politics (terrorism, religion, missions, networks...) valid to you and the sounds and voice you present to the public?

We really do believe in the old maxim "who ever you vote for, government wins". Much like America, in Britain there is very little difference between the two major political parties so it does not matter who is in power. Of far more importance is the number of people who are refusing to vote in the electoral charades. Basically, Politics with a capital 'P' is a load of fucking shit in our books.

On the other hand politics with a small 'p', that is in the essence of day to day survival, is valid and also reflected in our audio work. The subject matter of our audio wreckordings reflect things that we consider reflect things that we consider important or of some interest in some way. Again, it comes back to extremities in all its forms. I never see a time when THE GREY WOLVES would stand on a soap box and say this is the right way to think in terms of religion for example. That said we are very much into saying "have you thought about religion in these terms?". Far be it from us to put ourselves up as "spokesperson for the electronic generation". Besides all that we don't care what the public or anyone reading this might think of THE GREY WOLVES work, just as long as we are satisfied with it.

Your three LPs seem to have distinctively different motives and approaches. Can you distinguish the strategies both musically and visually?

The LPs, 'Punishment', 'The Age of Dissent', 'Catholic Priests Fuck Children' are different in many ways and the way we approached each LP, for example the type of equipment we used in putting the records together, was indeed different each time. Our motivation for each LP was to make a record that would stand the test of time... something that you could listen to in 5 years time without being embarrassed about your involvement. I think we have achieved that much and I really do consider them classic records full of passion. I think anybody who takes the time to listen to any of the LPs will find it a positive experience.

The graphics and images for the cover packaging were made up on all occasions by things we had lying around or had been sent to us in the post. At one point we were seriously considering putting a photo of Ryan Giggs (the Manchester United footballer) on the 'Punishment' cover - that was until he started missing open goals *(what a sad pity for him to miss out on this opportunity-S.)*. It is too easy to slip into "let's put a dead baby on the cover" type mentality which seems prominent in the wonderful world of hard core electronics.

"Force is the Law"... does this maxim still hold true? Would you not consider ignorance the biggest force to combat in this age? Are force and violence all that remain when intellect has failed to evoke change?

To a certain extent "Force is the Law" does still hold true as a maxim. On a very basic level if a naughty child does not do what his mother says he is usually to get smacked. This scenario is a microcosm of society at large/as a whole. If the natives get a bit restless the government has no hesitation in sending in the riot police and if the cops can't handle the situation, out comes the bigger stick in the form of the army as in northern Ireland for example.

As I have said earlier, knowledge is power and there really is an information war going on all around us. Those people with the information hold the means of control. The slacker mentality of being in a constant state of hedonistic bliss, ignorance which suits those in power just fine. There were very strong rumors circulating during the period of civil unrest in the early 80s that the government flooded certain areas like Toxteth with heroin in order to keep the masses impotent - a sort of chemical lobotomy. It is for this reason that we always expect 'films' on TV when there is likely to be an uprising or riot in northern Ireland. TV= Technological Valium.

Violence can solve things if it used effectively and this concept is what THE GREY WOLVES song 'Victory Through Violence' explores. We do not advocate meaningless violence such as beating people just for the adrenaline rush, which can be quite addictive. On the other hand, if someone was to beat up a convicted child molester in order to get him to move out of their area, this is something we would support.

What is cruel? How do you view the aspects of cruelty and it's continuities and manifestations? Is the modern world far less cruel then when men lived in connection with the earth?

A hard question to answer. One of our friends was asked by his mother to dispose of some unwanted newborn kittens. He promptly took the kittens, who still had their eyes shut, outside and proceeded to stamp all over them - this totally freaked out the children who were playing in a swing park nearby. The same bloke also, while babysitting, ate some chocolate easter eggs that were intended for the children he was looking after to have the next day. Bad enough, you might think, but he also smeared their faces with the chocolate and left the wrappers near the kids' beds. By all accounts the children got battered stupid when the parents got home - especially when they said they had not touched the eggs *(and you thought you were extreme?-S)*. Both of these incidents are cruel but at the same time humorous where as something else could be considered cruel full stop.

I don't think the modern world is any more cruel than it used to be... it's just a matter of cruelty manifesting itself in different ways as technology develops. Cruelty is a necessary evil in that it is required so that people have the ability to feel things like compassion.

What do you see manifesting for THE GREY WOLVES?

In the immediate future plans are in hand for an (un)performance in Salisbury (near Stonehenge) to celebrate the summer solstice on June 21st. There are also plans for a couple of combined GREY WOLVES/CON-DOM dis/plays in Germany this august. One at the Brainattack festival in Rostock, the other at the Industrial Underground festival in Esterhofen being put together by Pagan Musak. There is also the possibility of doing a dis/play in Berlin toward the end of the year, but nothing is confirmed as of yet.

On the wreckording front our next releases are likely to be a 7" picture disc 'Zero Tolerance/Dominator' on Membrut Debile Propaganda (germany), also there is a track, 'Sisters in Arms' destined for The Ajna Offensive 'How Terrorists Kill' compilation and another track 'The Glass Teat' for an AIPR (Germany) compilation. This comp. has packaging which consists of a 3kg glass stone which has to be smashed before the record can be played *(I believe it when I see it-S.)* Our major release for '97 is a CD as yet untitled, which will be realized by Germany's Tesco.

Seriously, a very brutal band...

THE GREY WOLVES. 62 Saxby Street, Salford 6, Manchester M6 7RG, UK

LOST IN THE CARPENTER'S WORKSHOP

OR

THE SMALL PRINT

Reviews can be a very bad thing. What we have here are probably half of the original reviews which were done for this issue (mostly by Tyler, but some by me and some others). The others were cut because we either felt that the release was a complete shit, it's mediocrity was not even worth a bad/average review, the release was too old, or simply we didn't want to cause too much friction with certain individuals (sometimes we do keep our big mouths shut). There are also these kind of reviews which are pseudo-positive but then the disc is never listened to again (and more often than not becomes a source of lunch money). Some of that fat was trimmed. On the other hand, if you sent in a release and it doesn't appear in these columns it doesn't necessarily mean it falls into the above categories. DESCENT isn't going to be one of these zines which advertises "over 800 reviews!" or some shit, it's just too much, even though there are probably about 300 here. Please don't bitch if your release isn't reviewed here. Take it instead as criticism or abstinence on our part. There are lives to lead. The underground music world is so extensive and overwhelming at the moment it's impossible and unbearable to listen to everything that comes in (times have changed). We'd rather listen to the good music than the torture of yet another "look how evil we are"/keyboard lesson/agromosh/ "We worship and want to be [popular band name here]"/whatever..... does this even need to be said? Sometimes, as stupid as it may sound, a release even comes around that is too good for words.Many of the reviewed acts are very worthy of your listen, and we try to uncover some more obscure items... it's all a matter (or lack) of taste anyway... and we still are obsessed, even if a lot of these might seem to say otherwise. If the type's too small... too bad!

Special thanks to Tyler for his motivation and enthusiasm on this end of things.
TAINT=well... TAINT, C= Claudia, B=Bane, S=Stephen, MS=Malleus Stormcrow, D=Bog entrapment

SOUNDS

ABIGAIL- Confound Eternal 7" (Of God's Disgrace)- Well, it sure is nice to hear real drum sounds on a metal release instead of the usual triggers. ABIGAIL return with two tracks very much in the old VENOM-esque vein which characterizes this band so well. Great sound and solos with the primitive edge and fluttering bass drum.(S)

ABIGOR- Opus IV CD (Napalm)- I enjoyed this band more when they were simply black metal perusing battlefields. I kind of like this release too, as it has some mixed tempos woven through most songs finding new transitions and sounds to incorporate into the framework. It is a shame that they seem to follow every trend over the span of time: first it was weapons and corpsepaint, battlefields and ogres, now it is astral visions, space dimensions and runes. Too few think for too many. Two separate recordings, of which the first half is far superior.(B)

ABRUPTUM- Vi Sonus Veris Nigrae CD (Full Moon Prod.)- What does a typical DESCENT editor's meeting evolve into? Witchcraft and ABRUPTUM. This third opus has been long awaited here in the Descent camp. Accepted as the best ABRUPTUM release since the "Evil" 7". We have visions of sado-masochism (It performs solo on this album), torture crypts and the shedding of blood. Improvised madness and dark sorcery. Magnificent wisdom from the Evil Genius!(D)

ABSU- The Third Storm Of Cythraul (Osmose)- Denizens of Texas, which is basically a large racially and culturally inbred cesspool beneath pounding swelter, releases to us their third full length. Fanciful mythology and fantasy played as technically good thrash. For some I suppose. Texas, home to rampant Mexicans, degenerate cowboy rednecks, caustic scorched heaths, and the winter zephyr (Err... I really like this album actually.-S).(MS)

ABYSS- Summon The Beast (Nuclear Blast)- Peter Tagtren of the more mentionable ABYSS studio rather than his band HYPOCRISY puts forth his second black metal effort. The cover is some sort of terrible SUICIDAL TENDENCIES evolution. Competent skill blazing, fast, unmemorable riffs both repetitive and mostly boring. This one will not take one very far if anywhere. Summon the yawn.(MS)

ACRIMONY- Tumuli Shroomaroom CD (Peaceville)- KYUSS bring them far ahead of their last album... numbin' guitar and space-ships vox... over all a burning field of droning and smoldering fuzzz. Extreme greatness and heaviness in the rock, ie: 'Motherslug (the mother of all slugs', 'Heavy Feather', 'Million Year Summer', yeah indeed.(S)

AETERNUS- Beyond The Wandering Moon CD (Hammerheart)- I've been anxiously anticipating, literally salivating, awaiting the arrival of this AETERNUS offering. I was not expecting anything as that always leaves one feeling true anguish. Upon numerous listens I am truly convinced that I am pleased with this one overall. Certainly the minor bits which leave me a bit disappointed are ultimately crucial , but I can only hope that it just keeps moving in my direction. Any triplet of songs on this could without a doubt sweep me off my feet, and I think that is why I liked 'Dark Sorcery' so much; the length. This release sees these Norskies attempt to stretch it all a bit too far. Hopeful and epic with savory production, amazing drums, sparse keyboard inclusion(take a note every other metal band now utilizing them!) and the heavy hypnotism. (B)

AGARTHI- At The Burning Horizon CD (Red Stream)- Six members in this outfit and it still sounds as if the drums are fake. A hint of METALLICA in the first song and some interesting dual vocal effects, sounding like water siphoning through a funnel. Attempts at incorporating keyboard elements into the music wears a bit thin and as usual, pervades where the guitar and bass are left in the shadows.(B)

AGONIJE- Testament CD (AR-GOAT) The debut from this fresh Swiss label and it certainly has set the standard for their preference. This Italian creation is one berthed from two Italians(I believe) and they have brought something quite interesting to my ears in the form of a sort of electronic orchestral/ medieval music. This gets to be a bit trance forming at times and generally tends to avoid the obnoxious pompous elements or overly generic blandness that often plagues many of this genre. What really sets it apart is the strong use of vocals, both in a narrative and singing element(in Italian) although the choice of electronic samples is at times a bit usual, the complimenting sampling is a bit unusual in combination and sets this in a quite excellent direction. Quite a bit more interesting than many of the more recent electronic releases I've heard lately, and with a unique character. Listen to this.(S)

ALLEGIANCE- Blodomsoffer CD (No Fashion)- Simply a fierce version of a sea of anti-christian bands hailing from Scandinavia who simply talk lots of evil, violent bullshit and complain about being trampled by the stronger. Whine, whine. Let's see some action to back up all the threats and promises.(B)

ALLERSEELEN- Sturmlieder CD (AORTA/STORM)- Admittedly most familiar and keen with the Schwartzer Rab cassette I was most moved by this release when it came around to the third song, which is where the beat driven, lunging industrial is left behind. From there it turns into simple multi-layered compositions which sometimes employ somber soft German vocals minimalistically refined in nature. Little of surprise once you get more than a minute or two into each song. The theme this time unveiled is Haus Atlantis, created via expressionistic constructions by Bernhard Hoelger. Absolutely stunning presentation.(B)

AMBER ASYLUM- The Natural Philosophy of Love CD (Release)- Mournful, regretful musings, isolation, martial tales and endurance. Taken as a whole whole there are moments of sound as emotion, a greater self determination in the music. The first track uses drums as percussion which is an unusually typical approach for these musicians, 7 tracks, which technically & of them being new to us. The tracks are descriptive of scenes which is an adjustment for me, being more used to having/hearing descriptions of emotion.(C)

AMESTIGON / ANGIZIA CD (Napalm)- This is perhaps one of the oddest/worst split albums released in recent years. AMESTIGON give us their vein of the standard northern IMMORTAL-esque stuff while ANGIZIA perform some of the most schizophrenic material yet... it seems as if everyone in the band is purposefully clashing to create the most chaos possible. Black metal circus music... or perhaps we should all turn the page in our sing along coloring books.(S)

AMON- s/t CD (Murder Release)- A dark trip though ancient tombs in the ambient AS way, but exchanging the sinister for arcane. Trance-forming yet a bit away from the minimalist barriers. Opium dreams.(S)

AMON- El Khela CD (Eibon)- The pharaohs and their inherent enigmas seem to be the source of inspiration for this Italian ensemble. Sweeping netherwhirls and cosmic permutations raise their wings to smile and disappear under the veils of superstition. 7 tracks nearing 70 minutes with a presentation to commend. This acts second CD(the first being a Murder release) and the fifth from this label. The heat and sand create desolate atmospheres devoid of life and the pursuit of this realm. "She Touched The Stone" is the only track which bears any semblance of light and whilst King Diamond noted the curse of the pharaohs AMON evokes and wields it with precision and care.(B)

AMPLEXUS- Various Artists (Projekt)- This total display of professional electronic programmed music is stunning in a very modest way. A collection of 3 3" CD's by 3 artists, whom I will describe below, originally released by the French Amplexus label. Each of the artists create very visual sounds and bring you through their realm of atmospheres. VIDNA OBMANA's three stage quest is a summery sketch of collaged sound quite authentic and very spacious. The tribal, ritual percussion based style of Tom Brennan leads into the very prolific Steve Roach whom puts us within his creation of samples and tones. Very mellow.(S)

ANGEL CORPSE- Hammer Of Gods CD (Osmose)- Wow, I'm fucking floored by this one. After hearing about this spawn of ex-ORDER FROM CHAOS I was cursed to receive their demo and their debut album in the same week. Cursed because I hadn't heard them earlier. Musically, ANGEL CORPSE plays a violent, sinister and chaotic perfect form of blade/ death metal in the battleground pioneered by POSSESSED and MORBID ANGEL, leaning heavily toward the latter's "Altars Of Madness". Tight, raw and brutal in the interesting way, I'd even say this release puts the last two MORBID ANGEL albums to shame with it's sheer ferocity. If you are a fan of pure abyssic death metal you will worship this brilliant album.(S)

ANUBI- Sucemus Skambes 7" (Danza Ipnotica)- Corpse painted drawings are always a frightening introduction. ANUBI is from Lithuania and all their lyrics are in the mother tongue, so I know not the approach, although the music is straight up hardcore/ punk rock- especially the DC drumming style, almost funky bass and exploratory guitar. Contemplative and excited vocals. Confused?(B)

ARCANA- Cantar De Procella CD (CMI)- With all the hype surrounding this Swedish duo, I have to admit I was a bit disappointed when finally receiving their debut, but I suppose I set my expectations too high. However, ARCANA really are truly adept at creating some excellent electro-symphonic pieces complete with magnificent operatic male and female voices at times. Perhaps what lost me in this album was the standard sample sounds used for composition... a bit more variety would have added a more true orchestral essence... more human... but perhaps that is the point. Excellent imagery upon this... but to me this music just lacks some sort of soul which I search for.(S)

ARCANTA- Self-Titled CD (Projekt)- Stepping into this one blindly, I did not know what to expect... but I was pleasantly surprised. This trio from Chicago collaborate to create four tracks of a warm, calm and enchanting type... utilizing mainly traditional musical elements(Indian scaling Euro-folk guitar, Monkish chants, etc.) combined with the common maybe(?)... still it satisfies my musical palate. The band will hate this but if you enjoy some of the mellower DEAD CAN DANCE material you will also appreciate ARCANTA.(S)

ARCH ENEMY- Black Earth CD (WAR)- Guitar drum interplay on this conquered me. They even use that ideal bass sound. This is a return to classic Swede death and powerful as all hell with no bull-shit... as well done as it could be and I praise it.(S)

ARCHON SATANI- The Righteous Way To Completion CD (Cold Spring)- Four extended tracks bring again the thunderous waves of dark bleakness and ritual rhythm. The ambience of this group has always been sinister in nature to my ear, although a more serene peace seems to be the quality herein. Broade and more spacious than ever, yet you drown in the ebbing. Outward from the chambers for the shelter of the night's sky and the heavens' glory.(S)

ARCTURUS- La Masquerade Infernale CD (Misanthropy/MFN)- Another grand work from this band, the northern star again gives us a full range experience in sound. Now, more than ever, the whole theatre feeling is abundant, maybe akin to something like DEVIL DOLL in that way (some of this music is also reminding me of them). Fucking rock opera for the '90s. Sweeping atmospheres and incredible melodies, which come very close to falling off the ledge of ridiculousness at times yet always maintaining their integrity and strength. More than ever the vocals and, especially, lyrics are more prominent, it is unusual that I remember lyrical passages so this is actually a bit surprising. There really are some classic phrases here. Without having seen them I would assume that the themes here are about one's internal conflict of accepting the sinister and stronger side, perhaps artificially resisting it. They finally brought in the real strings and additional vocalist, and spent quite some effort in the post-production of the sound it seems. This band really continues to impress me which each release. I really think they may be the ones who break free from the Norwegian notoriety into fandom. But what the fuck do I know?(S)

ARGENTUM- Ad Interitum Funebraum CD (Full Moon Prod.)- I can honestly say, when it comes to extreme metal bands from Latin America, Mexico is not capturing the throne of interest(except XIBALBA). A bold statement I know, but ARGENTUM may be in the wrong area for what they are attempting. Musically we have (actually, a bit bland at times) depressive and mystical mid paced, keyboard heavy, and a bit epic death metal. Quite interesting but not all together aggressive as one might expect. Yes, ARGENTUM have definitely earned this album as they've released several demo tapes and "paid their dues". Occult metal in it's more interesting forms, intricate lyrics and while a bit primitive at times, I feel this may grow on me heavily (six months later I was wrong).(S)

ATRAX MORGUE- Sickness Report CD (Release)- Interesting that Release should choose ATRAX MORGUE with the wealth of projects out there to issue. AM has been around for a few years now and has self-released tons of tapes of his work covering all of the depraved categorized topics: from necrophilia to forensic pathology. Residing in Italy, Marco has quite a foundation to work from and this fulmination could be seen as a bastard son of MB, minimal but disturbing in it's approach. The ultimate highlight of this work is the track "Ipoleptic". Recorded spontaneously I can't appreciate it much on a CD, live however would be an entirely different story, especially since this is LOUD. (B)

ATROX- Rise/Silence The Echoes 7" (Danza Ipnotica)- From Norway, but more along the lines of a melodic rock group with 3RD AND THE MORTAL touches, dominated for the most part by the Diamanda/Kari inspired vocals, with at times male metal bellowings. Frequently it verges into the death metal genre. Now have a CD out on Head Not Found, or so I'm told.(B)

AUBE- Monochordattune 7" (Gender-Less Kibbutz)- With all the AUBE releases flooding the market I figured it best to pick a random piece for review. All of AUBE's packaging that I've seen follows the same aesthetic and for that reason alone I am attracted to these works. It just so happens that the man behind the act is the man behind G.R.O.S.S., a reputable Japanese tape label. This 7" is the result of solely steel wires as source material. Luckily Nakajima has a sense for ambient- noise compositions ensuring interesting patterns and structures, likewise repeat listens. "Monochord" is more grating and dragging whilst "Attune" is wrapped up in tones and cathartic enveloping waves. I shall have to proceed from here and give his other works a listen.(B)

BEHEMOTH- Grom CD (Solistitium)- Baal sums up the feel of this CD with his discovery of his body as part of his image= metal/physical. I was unprepared for this change in BEHEMOTH of all bands! Who next... MARDUK? Imagine that the second song, for the first is, of course, an intro, has a segment with beautiful female vocals accompanied by deepblackheartfelt male pipes. No longer black in any real sense, this regresses to an approximation of a death band retracing their roots, musically, to the days of thrash. Atavistically charging Slovak pride lies at the core of their metaphysical side. I find the new era to be interesting, enough so that it will hold my attention. Actually at times this reminds me of "Those Of The Unlight" by HARDUK.(B)

BEWITCHED- Encyclopedia Of Evil MCD (Osmose)- Five covers and one original here done with strength and conviction. VENOM, "Warhend", BATHORY "Sacrifice" MERCYFUL FATE "Evil", FROST "Circle Of The Tyrants" and BLACK WIDOW "Come To The Sabbat" which is unfamiliar to me. All these are done well and I've heard negative comments regarding the lack of vocal replication attempts on the FATE song but I'd say it's probably for the best. It is still an excellent cover. How many bands have dared try to pull off such a feat? They seem most adept to the VENOM sound and their own composition 'Hellcult' may fit in amongst these all somewhere, although it really did little for me.(B)

BISHOP OF HEXEN- Archives Of An Enchanted Philosophy CD (Hammerheart)- The only memorable parts were the hefty percentage of intros and outros stolen from films. Hey, they're Jewish..(that's not very Black Metal!

BLACK TAPE FOR A BLUE GIRL- Remnants Of A Deeper Purity CD (Projekt)- This band is somewhat legendary in some musical circles, but I believe few of DESCENT's readers are familiar with their work. BTFABG is the main musical outlet for Projekt's founder/chief Sam Rosenthal and his seventh album under that name. This grabbed my attention as it captures a medieval ensemble feel chilizing cello, violin, keys and also mesmerizing vocals from both sexes. Clearly a softer blend overall, but quite rich in it's entirety, and refreshing. BTFABG clearly are experts at creating this deep meditative type of music... very, very nice. Very much in a similar vein as AMBER ASYLUM...(S)

BLOOD MEMORY- Pilgrims Of The Dawn Demo- Curious to see that the person behind this project has moved from Denver to Portland, uses the SS insignia, the solar wheel, the Totenkopf ring imagery and has a name not unsimilar to another, with much the same taste. Despite all that nonsense the recordings here immediately caught my attention due to the powerful first 15 minutes or so. Strong ritual ambient effects certain to tap into your mental facilities if for no other reason than to rip your soul out and replace it with doctrines of purity and will emblazoned with rash attacks on sense and complacency. Live recordings which capture the essence even if somewhat rough in it's various transformations.(B)

BORIS- Absolutego CD (Fangs Anal Satan)- One track, just over an hour, of incredible dirge/sludge. They're so thick it's hard to imagine them as only a three piece. Clearly an EARTH touch, and MELVINS squeeze out at times as well... unbearable to some but I cultivate. Recommended piece of false minimalism. Hail Wata.(S)

BORKNAGAR- Self Titled LP (Malicious)- Malicious takes the big leap with a gatefold full colour LP steering away from the classical "black" approach opting for the popular new age look. The intentions are clearly defined on the sleeve and deal with, surprise, the ancient past "where man had to learn, respect and fear nature in order to survive." A bit behind the times concept wise this ferocious album combines the speed and intensity of ENSLAVED with more experimental approaches similar to ULVER, and I must say I hear SATYRICON more than frequently. Track 2 seams to be a tribute to another ancient past- MAYHEM- as it closely resembles "Silvester Anfang" off 'Deathcrush'. Heavy usage of bellowing male wordless haunts, heartfelt musings and ponderings of the vast, cold landscapes and classic Norwegian bombasticism most often interspersed with passages of blazing, glorious speed. Oh yeah, contains members of ENSLAVED, ULVER and GORGOROTH.(B)

BURZUM- Daudi Baldrs CD (Misanthropy)- Interesting that this should be on Misanthropy rather than Elfenblut since this is all recorded via computer and keyboard whilst incarcerated. Infinitely more personal than political with an interesting shift being made apparent in Norway's higher scene. Sappily dramatized and I have a difficult time fathoming the morning, the reverence, unless he is playing with the theme of the analogy of the self? The constant undercurrents of vanity and humility are a bit trying and the ceaseless repetition. The dramatic frolics with the absurd and the sounds faintly simulate the hunt and anticipation of the kill.(B)

CANAAN- Blue Fire (Eibon)- Another release from this mystery label, stunning and from a different perspective being more gothic in essence, perhaps influenced by the mighty Monumentum, fairing far more electric and programmed. Echoing and longing vocals fill this space as does a calmness, a nonchalant chagrin, an oscillating vibration producing...?(B)

CCCC- Flash CD (Cold Spring)- Cosmic Coincidence Control Center unleashes a new CD with beautiful images of Mayuko Hino, Japanese porn star who accompanies CCCC for live performances, with her rope and candles. Unfortunately the noise herein does little for me. The first track is unrelenting layers of noise, harsh electronics, feedback and it screams non stop for what seems like forever. The second track "I Wish" is a "harsh remix version" which makes me wonder, casually, but for one second. Slightly more to this track as there are hints of structure and textures which can be gleamed from the surface, fluctuations of tones and levels give it a handle, but about the only time I would pop the CD out of the tray is to look at the photo underneath.(B)

CHIVA- Oracle Morte CD (Witchhunt)- This sounds influenced by NAOS. It's a solo project by the guy from SADNESS ,who are favorably viewed in O'Malley's eyes. Corny in a pompous pseudo-militaristic vein. Blatant samples from a sound effects CD. This may be "dark" to a six year old.(D)

CLOP NEPLAT- CD1 (Demonosound)- 3 tracks and for some reason I'm making a correlation with MAEROR TRI. Thirsty barren earth split with the trunks of withering silhouettes is the image, striking, gracing the package and could be a metaphoric expression of their musical sound hallucinated audibly. "Maximum volume for maximum results."(B)

COCK E.S.P./ DEATH SQUAD Cassette- The COCK E.S.P. side is entitled "Temporary Paralysis" and is a pleasant arhythmic flurry of frequencies and layers of high pulses and squirms, reminding me of MACRONYMPHA oddly enough. This is the first I've heard and although this is but a brief introduction I would certainly not hesitate to delve farther in. DEATH SQUAD has issued many, many tapes and this one is better than most of his past tapes. Somewhat more approachable in the sense that whilst not terribly varied it does incorporate vocal groans and scathing shrieks of sorts upon monotonous hovering feedback frequencies. "Residue" it is entitled and the second segment of this brief encounter seems as though it could be the residue scrapped of the epidermis of a gas attack victim, yielding flurried frantic viruses sure to infect and cauterize your senses, leaving you discombobulated and dumbfounded.(B)

COFFIN SHAKERS- Dracula Has Risen From The Grave 7" (Primitive Art)- Oh Bela! Rawhide and rockabilly meets goth. Ouch! A serious Dracula complex.(B)

COMA VIRUS- Hidden (Side Effects)- This project is notable for the fact that it is one of the members of TANGERINE DREAM, new age electronic champions for many years. This conjures soundtrack music still, but this would compliment a Michael Crichton or Stephen King movie. Suspense driven without a climax.(B)

CONTROLLED BLEEDING- The Poisoner CD (Solielmoon)- The first part of two here starts off sounding like they took a "Sounds of the Night" record with heavy cricket chirpage and put an ominous "dark ambient" hum under it. At times it could remind me of EARTH meets some tech-industrial band that I'm pleasantly ignorant of.(B)

COVENANT- In Times Before The Light CD (Mordgrimm)- Good production, classy layout, decent riffs but it suffers from too much synth and a general lack of any zest. At times this sounds like DIMMU BORGIR and SATYRICON. '96 Norwegian black metal for ya whilst shying away from the image to an extent. Every song on here is going to sound the same one can predict without venturing forth.(D)

CRADLE OF FILTH- Dusk... And Her Embrace CD (Fierce)- How to approach this one. I don't really care about this band any more. Their whole world comes across to me as more KISS than anything else: He with the best gimmick wins. Death metal with keyboards, well executed and incorporating female vocals, goth oratory and Cronos, disapointingly at the end of the CD. English, vampiric, romantic metal which is not as orchestral as I was expecting, not as grand and epic. Dani presents his usual screeching bark juxtaposed with deep, froglike vocals all encompassing his ever growing themes of the erotic and the sinister, literary and pictorially.(B)

CURRENT 93- The Starres Are Marching Sadly Home 1-sided LP (World Serpent)- This being the last in the "Inmostlight" trilogy. One of Tibet's most personal and beautiful works to date. By far the most moving he's recorded. Soft drapes flowing whilst Tibet gently sings, accentuated by three female vocalists and Stapleton's varied array of concoctions, a myriad of audial delicacies. The melding of public and private is frontal and evocative. These words conjure images unlike few others.(B)

DARKNESS IS MY PRIDE- Litania Promo '96 Cass...- The presentation here portrays an atmospheric doom image with possibly a hint of the romantic metal thing that seems to be infecting the world, but this is fairly straight forward metal. Another band to drown in the sea of identity indistinctions. Decent, i suppose, mid-paced German black influenced metal with a Swedish death feel. Intro, 5 songs of which one is live. It reminds me of masses of releases which we get to review where it is impossible to sum it up uniquely, as it is not unique.(B)

DARK REALITY- Oh Precious Haze Pervade The Pain CD (Witchhunt)- "Baroque gothic art metal" aka Boy Scout metal. Save us please!(D)

DARK THRONE- Goatlord (Moonfog)- This unreleased 2nd album of the mighty DARK THRONE is actually a collection of rehearsal tracks from '90-'91 with vocals added in '94. I am familiar with a few of the tracks here from a live video that's around, but the style is indeed an excellent one. The great elements of their 'Soulside Journey' album is there along with new musical additions hinting to their epic 2nd and 3rd albums(in order of release) Female vocals are added at times with a strange melody effect, along with brilliant downtuned atmospheric riffs. Perhaps most striking about this CD is Fenriz's handling of the drums in a supremely technical fashion. This might have been inspired a bit from CELTIC FROST's 'Into The Pandemonium' period again foreshadowing what was to come in DARKTHRONE's future musically. Excellent imagery and elegant design top off what is likely a must have release for black/ death metal appreciators. If death metal bands would have found 'Soulside Journey' more inspirational than SUFFOCATION, the metal underground would be a lot more interesting these days (Oh, shit the fuck out O'Malley).(S)

DEATH IS JUST THE BEGINNING IV 2CD (Nuclear Blast)- I haven't seen one of these in quite a while and Mr. O'Malley sure did have his household rolling when he busted out the video from the series. I was unaware that Nuclear Blast was involved with the diversity of acts as is included on here. Plain ol' death metal, goth influenced metal, electronically diverted metal, shit breed metal and black metal. I wonder how many copies they sold by including SATYRICON on here? 29 tracks with 19 of them = technically, unreleased.(B)

DEAD BODY LOVE- Case 3 7" (Self Abuse)- Albert Fish. Maybe a little too predictable in most every context. A gabber dance rhythm with a power electroned abrasiveness to it. Leading in it's accosting, akin to a TV-based docudrama (B)

DEATH PILE- Boshbutcher Cassette (Bloodlust!/ Malsonus)- Slow brooding power electronics by the head honcho of DEAD WORLD. Each track has several repetitive electronic tracks. Both high and low ended layered with either distorted vocals or spoken word tapes. Track titles reference sexual violence: "Ordeal"(Linda Lovelace), "One Man Slaughterhouse(Kemper)", along with Manson("The Hanged Man") and satanic violence "In Satan's Name". DP have recently produced an entire cassette about satanism titled "In The Service Of The Dark Lord" and one about misogynist sexuality, "Agonize, Humiliate, Destroy".(TAINT)

DEATH SQUAD- Technological Genocide CD (Spastik Kommunikations)- 12 songs from the prolific Mr. Contreras and some of this is outstanding. The religious fetish carries on and with Japan, Waco and San Diego I can't imagine that will redirect itself anywhere or anytime soon. Jimmy starts this one off, and then the sounds kick in. Alternating frequencies, squiggles of sonic im/pulses, mechanized tones most similar to MB. Vocals play a large role on this as do the continuing obsessions of salvation, catastrophe (natural or manmade), faith, death, perversion and all the incestuous combinations thereof.(B)

DECEMBER- River Of Blood 7" (Elfenblut)- Miss Anthropy's side label to fit her specific desires that lie outside of the realm of metal, this one should appeal to those out there with a taste for goth and the SISTERS. The title track opens with a nice folk guitar, then a rock drum beat comes in and a bass line that has a heavy gothic prancing quality to it, all lying alongside a whispering pitiful soul. 'Venus In Chains' is more recognizable although no specifics can be named as I've never been persuaded by the goth genre too much. Nice aesthetic though.(B)

DECEMBER WOLVES- Promo CD '97 (Self released)- 2 songs here that are not too bad in the grand scheme. The first song has some odd flirting, fretful prancing, Celtic sounding guitar and the song title "We Are Everywhere" makes me wonder as to what they could be hinting at as I am aware of the fact that this is a popular logo used by a radical group called Queer Nation. Are they telling us something? I lived outside of Boston and I know that there is a big leather S/M gay scene there. The second song plays on the theme, "...Not With tainted Blood". Does he mean not HIV+? This song could very well be any other straight ahead Norwegian or Swedish act.(B)

DEUTSCH NEPAL- Comprendido!... Time Stop!... and world ending CD (CMI)- Always one band whom I can't quite decide on. This one isn't doing much for me due to the seemingly random samples culled from who knows what obscure source. The strictly instrumental/ electronic tracks or segments entice me with their Cold Meat styled death ambient industrial. The live vocals are somewhat appealing, I suppose. Absolutely peculiar and demented imagery and words. A collaboration with The MOON LAY HIDDEN appears and is, oddly enough, completely unmoving.(B)

DEUTSCH NEPAL- This Silent Earth Cassette (Old Europa Cafe)- A limited release of 333 copies by the ever intriguing DEUTSCH NEPAL. This tape seems to have me a bit confused after pondering song titles, sounds created and the fact that this whole project is somehow in honor of Jacques-Yves Cousteau. Wavering at times, percussive segments similar to more mainstream "industrial" acts, yet always exploring new and unique realms. "This Silent Earth" seems a dangerous title, to me, which would take more space than this review merits. A vivacious fish in a sea of regurgitating, exhausted chasms.(B)

DEUTSCH NEPAL and THE MOON LAY HIDDEN BENEATH A CLOUD CD (Arthur's Round Table)- 'A Night In Fear' and characteristic of their other works these three tracks are all without their own individual titles.. I'm assuming this is collaborative as DN's dark, rhythmic pulses and sampled voices are displayed alongside TMLHBAC's vocals, curious samples vaguely hinting at camaraderie, vilification of supremacy, with spite and vigor. The ensuing tracks fade from my impression, the last being dominated by almost techno like pulses. Heavy vocals throughout the trio.(B)

DIE SONNE SATAN- Sigillo CD (Sadisque)- This initial release from this new label founded by Cacophonoid Nihil is a great one. Actually a compilation of older tracks from various rarer cassette and compilation releases, but remixed and on the ol' disc format. DSS give us quality minimalistic ambience which is overall quite enchanting and mesmeric simultaneously. A fine CD for anyone into dark ambient.(S)

DIES- Credulo CD (Power And Steel)- A CD folder with a black and white 30's or 40's photo of nothing you would expect to be on a Power And Steel release. I have no idea as to what this strategy is about or implying. The music is diverse but more in the soundtrack realm: from a ritual like drum jam to a frozen piano dirge to fragments of industrialized components looped and articulated into electronic rhythms, pulses, feedback and flirtations conceptualized and driven to hedonism. A soundtrack for a damaged German decadent/ Dadaist art film? How will I next be caught off guard?(B)

DIMMU BORGIR- Devil's Path MCD (Hot) + Enthrone Darkness Triumphant CD (Nuclear Blast)- DIMMU BORGIR ain't BLACK SABBATH!(D)

DISMAL EUPHONY- Soria Moria Slott CD (Napalm)- This band has it all: naked female band members on the cover(and all ads) to appeal to the puberty-crisis boys throughout the scene, and DIMMU BORGIR (early era) clone sound. Learn about the concept of originality and free thought, kids. A non-interesting shit sandwich.(S)

DISSECTING TABLE- Human Breeding CD (Release)- To simply draw a parallel to the essence of this CD, imaging a deaf in TETSUO:Iron Man. Mechanical-organic play freely all over this album. Boldly futuristic, yet atypical and full of difference. Uncanny and quite good.(S)

DREAM INTO DUST- No Man's Land MCD (Chthonic Streams)- Our disc print: a grand image of impaled soldier ala Hagal or 'peace' symbol. DID soundscapes prove most interesting, darker passages into dreamlike cities (with occasional interruption of acoustic guitar and moaned vocal). DID are vaguely cinematic in quality and farther into experimental in the combination of sounds. It appears very introverted but I grasp it well.(S)

EMBRACING- I Bear The Burden Of Time CD (Invasion)- For some reason this CD fucks with my eyes more than an O'Malley creation *(please do not compare-O')*...The moniker is fitting with the lyrical content of the band but not with the music, as some of these songs have incredibly goofy pop rhythms more suitable for a dance club. Corrupted romance and sadness, pain and desecration. The guitar here has a more technical death metal feel to it and the snare has horrendous punch like effects on it at times which are OTT. A wide array of interesting transitions and passages and structures develop all over the CD which helps convey a sincerity in the musicianship, even if I don't respond emotionally in any way.(B)

EMPEROR- Reverence MCD (Candlelight)- Truly epic. What most all wise can truly be judged against. Blazing speed with a production more acute than a swarm of bats devouring populations of vermin. Ihsahn's voice is akin to the frothing of serpents(just don't watch the video!) recoiling doubled for eternal destruction. The drums on the second song convince me. lightning precise skirling in the omphitheatre of the sum being the omniscience of the self.(B)

EMPEROR- Anthems To The Welkin At Dusk CD (Candlelight)- Amazing album placing this band back on the top, after their long absence. Perhaps this will kick the clones in the bollucks to get them off their asses. Brilliant and Black Metal. Essential.(S)

EMPYRIUM- A Wintersunset CD (Prophecy)- Beautiful presentation and a lovely little intro not unsimilar to Mortiis meets OES. The rest, however, is the all too common overproduced romance metal sound. This is dedicated to "the beauty of nature" and has a few rougher edges, but it's the pop song production which prevents this from provoking much emotion. Not far from MOONSPELL.(B)

ENCHANTED- Breed My Sorrows Demo- The cover almost paints this as a SPECIMEN- influenced goth band but instead I'd describe what I hear to be Norwegians who live real close to the Swedish border, thusly influenced heavily by the death metal from there with more guitar leads and hints of IRON MAIDEN influences. The black vocals seem odd applied to this but I'd like to see some lyrics... "caress eternal weepy nights"... seems quite appropriate. What type of a caress?(B)

EN NIHIL- Death Keeps CD (Red Stream)- I find this release to be of a dark, ritual ambient variety with bouts of electro-tribalism. Only a vague curiosity shuffles it's haunches and meekly cracks it's lids, peering through the haze, wishing this somehow enticed me more with it's presentation. Like being lost in a cavern glimpsing traces of rot and decay, dampness clinging in droplets whilst unseen elements evoke nether spirits. I suppose the effort put into the atmosphere of the music is not represented in a visual sense and even song titles suffer the sounds. "Fall" is much more lofty and dreamy and a few tracks are mediocre, hollow, ambient compositions with disconcerting movie samples thrown in.(B)

ENDURA- Great God Pan CD (Elfenblut)- A beautiful package with "tarot" cards I never before was convinced of this bands hype but I can fathom it quite a bit more with this release. A work in progress for upwards of 4 years I wonder if this has something to do with the diversity herewith. From the bombastical approach ala AUTOPSIA to the acoustic "neo-apocalyptic folk" to the ambient, darkwave gothic, surreal and brooding. Some of the song titles are a bit much, but then again so is the plethora of those who follow any pre-ordained path.(B)

ENSLAVED- Eld CD (Osmose)- ENSLAVED still rule and this album proves their sound is brilliant. Near flawless production, great composition and an honest approach make this very appealing. You can tell they've been going for years... this band isn't out to create the fastest/most extreme/epic thing ever but what they've achieved is something much greater.(S)

ENTIRETY- Demo- An acoustic intro, a melancholy ballad. The three other songs are inspired by Andrew Morpill, whom I'm unfamiliar with. This sounds to me like the lead guitarist loves to play regardless of the type of band he is in and ENTIRETY just happens to be his only outlet. A totally lackluster demo and I can find only find comments to make relating to the guitar, as it is the only instrument played with any passion.(B)

ESOTERIC- The Pernicious Enigma 2CD (Aesthetic Death)- An excellent production demanding the utmost attention and self realizing to the hilt. Psychedelic vertigo. Heavily treated death metal vocals, often accelerated drum beats drowning with phased out guitars, whilst another guitar and keyboards dance with the wand of frivolity atop it all concomitantly, treading slightly divergent paths. Unique.(B)

EVER THE DAWN- Poems Burn The Past CD(Invasion)- Um, err, crack.(D)

EXIT 13 Featuring Bliss Blood- Smoking Songs CD (Relapse)- An excellent idea for an album, but this one lost me after a few songs as the joke becomes played out all too quick. As anyone could have predicted all of these songs are about that great mother of a plant- marijuana. The grindcore wizards this time around cover classic 20's, 30's and 40's blues and jazz tunes all dealing with "the marijuana culture and the many virtues of the weed." I may like some of the originals but even then it boils down to an obsession.(B)

EXODUS- ANother Lesson In Violence CD (Century Media) Who'd have thought? Riding the revival, they release a live album containing mostly earlier material. Whilst some friends in their late 20's really love this band I can honestly say I never was so fanatical. They rock though... top calibre speed/Dr.s of Heavy/etc.(S)

FALKENBACH- ...En Their Medh Rikifara CD (No Colours)- Perhaps one of the most interesting releases highlighting one of the fewer fresh genre's of black metal led by DIMMU BORGIR. What I speak of is a highly melodic, trancy production and keyboard heavy, lighter dreamy black metal. FALKENBACH utilize a drum machine and enough sounds to give their approach an almost pop-like structure and sound. Quite interesting, The layout is very nice yet poorly executed... turn up the resolution on your scanner! (S)

FATA MORGANA- Self Titled CD (Dark Dungeon)- Another Mortiis release, another project. This one features 7 compositions of a bright uplifting nature. More keyboard influenced with less swooshing winds and thunderous bombasticism. The title track is downright giddy and dancy. To get critical one could point out a lack of variance within the whole work but I fail to see that as a hindrance here. I would almost go so far as to call it fairytale music. The only disappointment is that the total running time is only 40 minutes.(B)

FIVE THOUSAND SPIRITS A Tapestry For Sorcerers CD (Sempiterna Mutatio)- I can't quite figure out how this one is taken. The review in Audio Drudge made me want to write away and inquire, yet I'd never gotten around to doing so. In Portland I immediately recognized the name and had to obtain it. This is comprised of RUNES ORDER, ALLO DIE and Raffaele Serra. New worldly but with a slight taste of the arcane. Maybe comparable to the HYBRYDS with fairly lengthened arrays. Compositions ranging from the hypnotically droning and swaying and gyrating to the pouncing rhythms and shamanic sci-fi pulsations. Over an hour in length.(B)

FORGOTTEN WOODS- The Curse Of Mankind CD (No Colours)- This longstanding act has hovered through the sublevels of black metal for several years now making it over to the No Colours camp to issue this full length. "The Curse Of Mankind" is to BURZUM what GRAVELAND's "In The Glare Of The Burning Churches" was to early EMPEROR material.... that is a shitty and sloppier, less charged interpretation of the milestones. Not performed in a totally poor way(as is the case with some acts) but nevertheless endlessly striving to reach the pentacle of perfection; one of what once was. Ahh...Norway.(S)

FUNERAL RITES- The Wintermoon... Demo- Well, this demo is pleasing only for the fact that it is the bands second demo in a time when this rarely happens. Readers of this mag might also notice our obsession with Japanese metal bands as well. FUNERAL RITES still are lacking the originality it takes to be separated from the herd, however, although they capture the raw 90's black metal (Norse influence, of course) sound fairly well. Musically something between "BURZUM", "Transylvanian Hunger", "Opus Nocturne" and "Wrath Of The Tyrant". Also a SODOM cover is included for freaks.(D)

GEASA- Starside Demo- From a slightly budding scene in Ireland comes the newest hopeful. A bit in the '93 Norwegian traditional(ala "Pure Holocaust") at times, especially vocally. GEASA's music also seems to step away into a more interesting rhythmic pattern, although not far enough to declare an outstanding effort. However, this young band's guitar/ acoustic intro's and interludes show the highlight of their effort providing something more interesting than the DARK THRONE influenced.(S)

GEHENNA- Malice CD (Cacophonous)- Again caught off guard by this magnificent Norwegian band, 'Malice' represents a growth in skill and maturity for GEHENNA. Once again defining new ground for their genre, it is sure to be initiated throughout '97(probably by a majority of American bands this time around). The syncopation of keyboard and guitars has progressed significantly within black metal by this band and this album showcases structures similar to keyboard/ extreme metal innovators NOCTURNUS's best work, or perhaps, more accurately, what they dreamed of. GEHENNA's influences range across the history of extreme metal from the mid 80's to today and their interpretation is superb. Stunning.(S)

GEHENNAH- King Of The Sidewalk CD (Osmose)- Another MOTORHEAD sounding LP from this Sweden's GEHENNAH, now known and revered for their metal humor. The opener is quite vocal based and has a full on MOTORHEAD rhythm. Also creeping in here and there are the blatant IRON MAIDEN and VENOM influences. I like it for it's basic catchiness but am bored with the jokes already. The first three songs are all great but then it all blurs together and disperses into repetition.(B)

GENOCIDE ORGAN- Mind Control LP (Tesco)- Well, I must say that I am somewhat torn with this one. I've heard tales of the power of their first LP although I have myself only heard a few tracks here and there. This album consists of 9 songs and comes in a black sleeve with a printed metal plate. The vinyl (here is thicker than a dinner platter and the music is near as thick. The first two songs are lackluster (the foundation of one being a JFK speech) but the second set of tracks on side one are crushing. Slow in it's intensity, and subsequently smatheringly brutal, a few songs here really differentiate these works from others within the genre refusing to lapse into overmodulated white noise. Fairly mundane titles: 'Saddam's Day', 'Hate', 'Burn' , but by far the best, 'Innocence Is A Farce'.(T)

GLOOM- Cold Once Turning Dust 7" (Demonosound)- A 7" contained within a 4 page magazine/folder. Incredibly minimalistic low end rumbling on the first side reminiscent of what one would feel and hear if a legion of tanks happened to drive by your room one morning as you are tossing and turning, unsuccessfully seeking solace in your nether world. The flipside "Tribal" is a simple loop creating a rhythmic beat overlain with a vague quote and a bit of distorted stereo rumblings, or something of the sort. One has to wonder where these all go?(T)

GORGOROTH- Antichrist CD (Malicious)- How can one not be skeptical of a release nowadays titled simply 'Antichrist'. Having not cared for their first release much I find this release to be immensely better. We are given multi-paced songs, an excellent full bass sound quite reminiscent of the Count's style, heavy death-laden rhythms backed with some powerful no frill drums and a much improved vocal approach. 'Gorgoroth' and 'Heaven's Fall' are by far the stand outs here even if they have got an almost "catchy" sound to them. Remaining as black as black can be yet incorporating a healthy Norwegian cultural feel, this is straight forward in it's approach but wickedly enticing and dare I say emotionally devastating. Unfortunate that only 6 tracks appear here. No lyrics came with this, but I may be thankful there. Quite possibly my fave black metal album of the year.(B)

GORGOROTH- The Last Tormentor 7" (Malicious)- Two live tracks of chaos and mayhem including "Revelation Of Doom" and "Ritual", their renamed demo track, originally "Sexual Blood Gurgling". A fair recording from Bergen, May of '96 with a rather gruffy vocal sound more reminiscent of some death metal bands than the classic 'Pentagram' black vocal screech. Heavy on the bass and a well captured drum sound and, don't quote me on this, but my guess is that this is limited to 666 copies.(B)

GRIEF- Miserably Ever After CD (Theologian)- Getting the boot from Century Media(for not standing up sales wise to STUCK MOJO most likely) the Boston doom crew move to a real underground label to deliver their heaviest yet. People are quick to slap SABBATH references on a band like GRIEF at the earliest instance... it's so easy to do. The truth is GRIEF has completely developed a melodic and savagely heavy sound of their own and love to fill up that chord. This band is solid as hell, and although I can't agree with 100% of their riffs , they succeed grandly in their tortured ritual yet again. Their vocalist makes you realize his agony and although it gets a bit rough to endure at times, his character is hands above many others. Mammoth.(S)

HAGALAZ RUNEDANCE- When The Trees Were Silenced 7" (Elfenblut)- Andrea Haugen, co-founder of AGHAST, does militaristic, volkisch anthems with traditional instruments. Pagan pure in execution and intention. One track appears to be based on traditional lyrics. Her husband performs strings and drum duties on this, whilst the Telemark Viking Choir does back up chants and vocals, along with another hot association or two. Looking forward to the full length, indeed.(B)

HANGED MAN'S ORGASM- Case 1 7" (Self Abuse)- Joel Rifkin, 13 counts of murder on women, some being professional ladies. the 7" is titled "Frenzy" and evokes some genuine tension. On first listen I couldn't fathom the concept, yet upon proper amplification it works remarkably well in conveying the terror. Disposal and the actual moment of death are re-created. The flies are the perfect accompaniment.(B)

HEADBANGERS AGAINST DISCO pts 1 and 2 7" (Primitive Art)- INFERNO sounds like the ACCUSED. Totally different from their release on Osmose. BESTIAL WARLUST is, well, themselves. SABBAT is sloppier than BW and this record is starting to stand along numerous other poor metal compilations, despite the "big" acts included. The SABBAT vocals sound like a hysterical babysitter whelping at the kiddies to behave and go to sleep or incur the wrath. GEHENNAH adds the other decent disco-obsessed track. HAD 2 includes NIFELHEIM in usual belligerent fashion although more listenable than normal, USURPER heavy as always and one more I forgot, and is fucking killer too. Pure METAL... but we'd still rather listen to SABBATH's disco-influenced "Thrill Of It All" than 98% of what metal we've reviewed today.(D)

HEILIGES EUROPA- Visionen Einer Zukünftigen Gesellschaft 7" (Mjolnir Tonkunst)- This is totally in German so it's indecipherable to me although there is a quote from Faust by Goethe. 4 songs of totally different approaches leaves me feeling a bit ambivalent with regards to their aesthetic. Side one has your typical march samples, German oratory, militaristic drum rhythms and whatnot. Side two is more "dancy" although the songs are too short, and incorporates more of a classical, symphonic atmosphere.(B)

HELHEIM- Fenris MCD (Necropolis)- This very controversial band from Norway has managed to metamorph throughout their career constantly creating new sounds for their equally as controversial fascist message. Yet, I say they have improved tenfold since their second and final demo with their debut digital release. HELHEIM have adopted a pseudo-industrial metal sound heavy in keyboards and effects(as well as programmed drums) which is effective and powerful in it's approach. This release is definitely on it's own but proves that there are always barriers to be conquered musically. The3 have far to go but they're in the 'right' direction.(S)

HELL-BORN- Self Titled CD (Pagan)- Yikes, watch out for the DESTRUCTION cover, it could leave an indellable mark on your stereo...

HEXENHAUS- Dejavoodoo' CD (Black Mark)- Ignore the title if you enjoy technical thrash metal with melody, because this is the poop. Although, guitar wankerish at times, it's also a bit awe inspiring for the style... and very well done. Forget the retro-thrash, this is the real thing.

IUGULA-THOR- Assholes MCD (Tesco)- Three tracker here of samples, grizzled noise (guitar and otherwise) and overall heaviness with a darker edge. A bit beyond most as it's structure is a bit more relevant and obvious. Great production leaves this as one of the better pieces I've experienced from this group.(S)

IMMORTAL- Blizzard Beasts CD (Osmose)- Surprised by the immediate and prominent MORBID ANGEL influence. Amazing VENOM inspired photo graces the cover of this one, outdoing the last zany photo session in the snow. This is as fast and heavy as any other release by these Balshyrkites. This album doesn't sound sped up artificially as the previous affair, but the death influence is heavy- no pun intended. A cool song structure and it's interesting to note that the vocals and music have a dry, less effected sound which give IMMORTAL a new, purer sound.(D)

IMPALED NAZARENE- Latex Cult CD (Osmose)- This is the first time in quite a while that I've been able to sit through a whole IN release. This time around they claim themselves "Nuclear Metal" and whilst not radioactively devastating there is a beneficial production here that maneuvers throughout the tracks with a crassness reminiscent of PUNGENT STENCH. It's the genius song titles ("I Eat Pussy For Breakfast", "Motorpenis", and "66.6 Foreplay") which prevent me from accepting this as anything other than a bunch of frustrated loners who've stumbled upon the S&M fetish scene.(B)

IMPERATOR- The Time Before Time CD (Pagan)- Death metal that's horribly mixed ala BEHERIT and has a very whiny whammi bar guitar. It sounds South American to me.

IN BLIND EMBRACE- Songs From The Shadows (CMI)- I must admit that only a year or so ago did I have the fortunate luck to meet someone with a fairly extensive CONTROLLED BLEEDING collection and from that person was I able to become acquainted with the sounds of these fellows. Quite an appropriate sound for the Cold Meat label, this work is along the lines of the 'Golgotha', 'Gag' and 'Hog Floor' albums- religious. What does that mean? Somber keyboards periodically fluttering along the flames of remembrance, wind swept cliffs, soaring waves crashing upon rocky edifices and a gothic church feel with gaspelesque male vocals presiding over the conjugation of the soulless downcast. Rozz Williams performs on one track giving this a broader scope of listeners, undoubtedly. Over 70 minutes.(B)

IN THE WOODS...- Omnio CD (Misanthropy)- Stepping forward from their previous identity they have captured an album worth of praise. A pair of vocalists soar off cliff created by the guitars and onto waves of sadness and strength. Extensive composition and melody create a new seriousness and respect for this towering act.(S)

INCANTATION- The Forsaken Mourning of Angelic Anguish MCD (Repulse)- I was really into their debut, yet the number of fake harmonics is humerous these days. This is overwhelmingly crushing most of the time and gives that old feeling again, with more obvious influences. "Scream Bloody Gore" makes this a bit more obvious and wicked sick.(S)

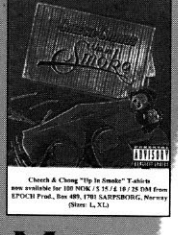
INTENSE BAALISM- An Anatomy of the Beast CD (Repulse)- Jap extremely rotting flesh. This death is in the ring with earlier '88-'89 Swedes in the death metal boxing league. Brawling guitars and a bloody fight through the whole of it. Very proficient musicians and it's done in the usual perfect Japanese way.(S)

IRON MONKEY- s/t (Union Mill)- Maybe the UK EYEHATEGOD. Pissed sludge (it ain't southern though) with pissed vocalist. Sometimes EPs are better, but heavy as fuck and pissed. Pissed Earache so much they had to sign 'em.(S)

ISVIND- Dark Waters Stir CD (Solistitium)- I was really expecting to despise this album after having read several interviews with the extremely immature band members and reading that one of the highlights (from the press sheet) being: "Isvind for the first time use partly English lyrics on their album,. Every Norwegian band changes the lyrics to their mother tongue but Isvind likes to move away from this trend." I guess all must speak English to be original, right? Anyway, to my surprise ISVIND create some well executed, albeit average, black metal in the Norwegian tradition. It may not be the most innovative material to be released recently but this band manages to perform some above average, and actually interesting, riffs throughout their raw pieces. A bit atmospheric at the best times, and sounds promising. (S)

KAPO!- DEATH IN JUNE Presents... CD (NER)- Curious title and presentation. Is Douglas relying on DIJ's name to sell this? Douglas and Richard Leviathan from STRENGTH THROUGH JOY bring us this mixed release. The first song "Wolf Wind" is, musically, straight off of 'Rose Clouds'. The song is similar and then things change. The third track "Headhunter" is a wild spliced miasma of voices and confusion. "A Sad Place To Make A Shadow" sounds to me like "Santa Claus is coming to town...". The remainder of the tracks are all ineffectual and have the softened, shadowed voice treatment which leads one to feel as if they are merely segueways into richer, fuller pieces. The last song is a reprise-surprise! This whole project comes off as being hurried and I'm sure Douglas is unhappy with more than one typographic error in the lyric booklet. I'm only slightly forgiving due to the first three tracks, but it will still take a bit more to win my heart back.(B)

KDNR- Diorda (Old Europa Cafe)-The "Prologue" is a drum loop on sedatives with a slowly increasing distant beckoning, moan or cry, or simply a call to the wild and what could be a large crowd chanting in unison taken down to a base level producing minimal peaks. "Diorda" completes the CD and is an excellent composition which utilizes some sounds which instinctively make my blood rush. Large metal or concrete rings spinning, or a metal bowl, accentuated rat or bird cries overwhelmed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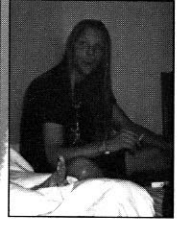


and sent reeling out into oblivion. Moans of bewilderment and confusion and always the spinning and spinning. As you work your way into the pabulum to gorge your frenzied minds the visuals are overwhelming- zoo sounds, motorcycles, tubes and pipes, toddlers, metal on metal and on and on. Splendid!(B)

JIM KIRKWOOD- Hammer Of The North CD (Aphelion)- Jim Kirkwood just seemed to appear out of nowhere but it's come to my attention that he has released a healthy volume of work over the past years, mostly on cassette. This CD is works inspired by the myths and religions of Northern Europe when the old gods and goddesses ruled. I was incredibly excited to listen to this until I opened up the CD and was presented with a list of equipment used on this recording; a lengthy list of electronic gadgetries and keyboards and so on. Immediately turned off, I proceed cautiously only to be further disappointed as this is very new age like, upbeat and happy, bouncy blood racing symphonies for mystic moods. I don't doubt his sincerity but I can't see all of these electronic instruments imitating natural tones successfully conveying the mood and spirit of the old gods and goddesses.(B)

JOYLESS- Unlimited Hate CD (No Colours)- 'Misanthropic Art Metal'. Honestly, when I listened to this only once there were some riffs stuck in my head, and they weren't so misanthropic or arty. They left the BURZUM behind from the FORGOTTEN WOODS days in exchange for some punky/bouncy/speedy metal, which really is a bit happy sounding actually (especially the bass lines). It might be tuneful enough for a spot on the next comp from K Records or an opening slot on the TIGER TRAP Norwegian tour.(S)

KLANGKRIEG- 38 cbm CD (ND)- ND continually release music with rich, well thought out, provoking packaging. KLANGKRIEG represents two Germans who utilize music as performance art. 6 tracks here of which "38 cbm" is an art installation. I would guess that these fellows are viewing sounds as experiences, actions, reflections of people. This duo stimulates my brain but I could not sit through this CD more than once. I feel the intention of these songs is to demonstrate the abilities of both the machinery and the minds of the participants, without the consideration of each song being comprised of segments completing the whole.(B)

KVIKKSOLVGUTTENE- Gamlem MCD (Head Not Found)- SLAYER+Cocaine= two great things that go great together.

LAW- Pariahs Amung Outcasts (Ant-Zen)- At first I was not too impressed with this and I really wanted to like it but the ridiculous death metal styled artwork repelled me for a while. Now I've overcome that obstacle I realize that some of this is excellent if not a bit "spooky" but also cold/ power/ psychedelic industrial, all cohesive to the particular songs but arrayed and various through out the disc keeping it interesting and provoking. Guns and electronics.(B)

LESS THAN JAKE- SLAYER 7" (No Idea)- I've heard this band is a big popular ska act recently signed to a major label. The SLAYER covers of "Evil Has No Boundaries" and "Antichrist" made it pertinent that I pick this one up to compare it to BM renditions I've heard with alarming frequency. True versions, essentially, with a bit of a death metal feel as compared to the originals, but worth the whole deal for the ska break on "Antichrist" and the sax solo on "Evil...". The A side plays normal but the B side is the same in reverse. Clever.(B)

LONSAI MAIKOV- FIRE CD (European Sun Editions)- Whoever sent this to Descent HQ's, (the return address had certain symbols upon it), customs decided to intercept the package and take a look inside. Due to this we have no information on this other than the CD itself. Wanting to come across as a Cthulhu or Twilight Command act this desperately tries to achieve these heights. Sounding like FIRE AND ICE without the occasional dance beats, lyrically coming across as a DEATH IN JUNE hopeful I suppose if I spent more time with this I may come to enjoy various tracks but one thing which disturbs me is the total lack of distinguishing characteristics from song to song. The music has the cool, "I'm never excited" essence, but the packaging screams "Here, look at how much knowledge we have". Every song is built around the same formula of soft guitar, occasional drums and a male voice, perhaps slightly soothed and warmed from a German, no doubt, wine.(B)

LOVE SPIRALS DOWNWARDS-Ever CD (Projekt)- LSD (Ho Ho) are new to me on disc although I did have the opportunity to witness a live performance by them in San Francisco, which was quite a let down. Take COCTEAU TWINS and forget the extra "umph" which helps to give the TWINS that dimension beyond and you will get a fair picture of what LSD creates. Dreamy , foggy balconies overlooking cobblestone streets blanketed in beads of precipitation, wrought iron banisters plucking drops from the air, taking in the night's scent after just having left the arms of a lover. Ethereal and simple to a point never quite breaking stride which could be rectified through excessive listenings.(B/C)

H.P. LOVECRAFT- Excerpts From The Sonnet Cycle 'Fungi From Yuggoth' 7" (available from AJNA)- A beautifully constructed edition of eight segments of an original edition, which includes 36 sonnets. Limited to 300 copies and complete with colour cover, 12 page booklet, text to a couple of the sonnets, a minor biography, quotes and a fair amount of graphics. Readings of excerpts from 'Fungi from Yuggoth with spine-tingling, bone-chilling, ethereal-seducing sounds. A worthy panegyric for the providential man...(B)

LULL- Continue CD (Relapse)- Although this is not my first experience with this aspect of Mick Harris's repitoir, it is my first real appreciation of it. Cascading waves caress in a never ending struggle against electronic feedback... as if the epitome of Caspar Brötzmann's guitar trembling on heavy sedatives. LULL give me visions of astral voyages, floating on clouds of chemicals. This purely electronic escapade is certainly soothing in the right ways, and should give reminiscence of past hallucinatory states, either drug induced or emerging from that chasm between sleep and consciousness. At over an hour this is definitely a concept piece of transcendental minimalism that has encouraged me further inside Mr. Harris' audial creations.(S)

MACRONYMPHA/ GOVERNMENT ALPHA- Obliteration CD (Mother Savage Noise)- Sit back and feel the crushing weight. This is hard to pin down exactly where the interests lie as the scope of references, titles and visuals covers the gamut of dissatisfaction. The assaults presented here are not that diverse compared back to back but there are some definite highlights. G. ALPHA's approach is more cyclical and regenerating and has a more direct electronic flavor whilst MACRONYMPHA is completely devoid of structures or rhythms. Leaving more to chance or whim or moments of emotion- which more often than not is disillusionment, contempt, anxiety and an utter refusal to fit any mold or accepted path. Catastrophic misanthropic values and an excellent sticker to boot.(B)

MALEFICARUM- The Unholy Falldown Of Christianism CD (Manitu)- The strong reaction to Catholicism always produces a curious black stain. "Metal 'Til Death" it proclaims. Graceless. There's even a reflective guitar piece named "Cry".(B)

MASTER/SLAVE RELATIONSHIP- Being Led Around By The Tongue CD (MSR)- Quite a bit different from 'This Lubricous Love' reminding me more of Lydia Lunch or Karen Finley although neither of those quite hit the mark. I envision a strong, dominant woman strutting her stuff on a stage whilst the music plays through scenarios of men in a multitude of humiliating positions, being dealt with severely. Pleasantly eclectic music from a jazzy surf sound to up front and dancy to feedback based demented synth to droning waves punctuated by soft shards of light to ... Song titles help complete the imagery adequately: "The Desire To Castrate Father", "Wet", "Force", "Pornographic Woman".(B)

MASTER/SLAVE RELATIONSHIP- This Lubricous Love CD (RRR)- Originally issued in '87 but re-released this is a project I expect many would come to admire and enjoy if they were more familiar. Somewhat dated in it's technological utilizations I doubt few fetishists would pass this up if for no other reason than that this was a purveyor of sorts looking back on the evolution of themes in the underground music scene. Totally immersed in S/M this includes much which hovers around the voice of Deborah, twisted and transmutated into a wealth of sonic blasts and rasps. Often harsh to the core and bordering on white noise some may want to explore this realm.(B)

MAYHEM -Ancient Skin CD Single (Misanthropy)- The first 'official' release from the landmark Black Metal band, released in special edition for their German gig this year. Yeah, yeah, yeah... most importantly, 'Ancient Skin' marks the return to the death roots of the band perhaps ala 'Deathcrush' with a major increase in skill levels. The band captures an intensity and brutality in sound and total aggression in energy. 'Necrolust' included in new version as well.(S)

MAYHEM- Wolves Lair Abyss MCD (Misanthropy)- This is incredibly brutal, especially the unrelenting punishment from the drum and bass section. Really, this is a return of death metal in a way which isn't rehashing something, but really destroying what was there before. It's impossible to compare this to "De Mysteriis Dom Sathanas" for obvious reasons, but I don't think they care. They are here to destroy the world and anyone whom has tried to get in their way. Incredibly violent, and bordering a bit on the edge of ones sanity. Excellent instrumentation and precision and totally extreme. How else could it be?(S)

MEN AMONG MICE- Various Artists CD (Warcom Media)- I must admit that I am somewhat torn by this release. Familiar with Warcom- the inflammatory device used to propel hate via San Jose, CA. 10 Separate artists present 12 tracks ranging from impressive to dull to terrible. I am surprised it took those inclined to certain white philosophies so long to catch on to the game of sampling, repropagating texts, speeches and ideas for musical purposes. The highlights include the COUP DE GRACE track, which is far superior to the tape I had; SOUL OF STEEL being R.N. Taylor; Charles Manson singing in Spanish; James Mason with reformulated Hitlerian words; Rbt. X. Patriot doing works not linked to the noisy post; a simple, impressive effort by CONTROL RESISTANCE and a few disasters and disappointments.(B)

DANIEL MENCHE- Screaming Caress CD (Side Effects)- Didn't we see this guy the same night as those Japanese clowns? This sounds very cannibalistic. The first two songs are pretty effective and confuse me as the following pair are the equivalent to the human beat box gone industrial. An incredible painting on the back of the booklet, infernal and beautiful.(B)

DANIEL MENCHE/RICHARD RAMIREZ- Hymns for Sliced Velocities 12" + I Keep My Stuff Inside LP (Tesco)- More noise paraded as art and how can a review of this label's efforts not discuss plumage? RAMIREZ, fashion designer, but did he design this package? Impregnable stock board padlocked shut and I probably spent more time trying to pick the lock and inevitably grind through it than I did listening to the full record. Vocals are prominent on side 1, robotic or intergalactic and the track's echo resounds within the corridors of the deathstar. Side 2 'Let Me In' also sounds thin - a hollowed recording chamber, low end rumbles, sporadic snippets of what could be transportation devices in all guises leading into an ambient segment and so on. Mean, mean Menche defines each of the three hymns in his own words which art better than any critical interpretation. The beautiful coalescence of text imagery (moribund Dada-ist painting/collage) and faux-alligator skin deserves applause alone. Amen.(B)

METRATON- Armies of Darkness Unite MCD (Holocaust)- With any album these days being dedicated to Mr. Grishnackh you have to be sceptical outright. I was surprised by the interesting ambient/noise influence (courtesy of ACAMOT)... unfortunately it washes into somewhat chaotic and boring MYSTCUM worship. The tracks are a chore to make it through, and I wouldn't dare imagine a full-length. But it's all about love, isn't it?(S)

THE MIST- Gottverlassen CD (Repulse)- Braz-death-thrash in SEPULTERA/SLAYERs' veins. I loved it in '87 or so but why the fucking mosh parts today?(S)

MLHEST- Case 4 7" (Self Abuse)- Beverley Allitt charged with 13 life sentences for euthanizing 'healthy' babies in a four and a half month stint at a hospital in England. Quirky in a new sense, although much more macabre and cohesive where all of the tones range or fluctuation is limited to a particular density standard. Reminiscent of the musical sequences from 'The Hunger' incorporating rabid monkeys.(B)

MÖCK- Vinterlandet CD (Hammerheart)- Sometimes bands can ruin it for me when they think themselves more important in this world than they truly are, and here is a perfect example. Substandard metal which is black and viking- another bunch of sheep. Typewriter OTT drums with tin can cymbals, decent slow trancy guitar with a warm, weak bass sound.(B)

MONDBLUT- Angsterfüllter Morgen CD (Ant Zen)- I'm certain I saw a MONDBLUT 7" grossly overpriced at one time with Manson's ubiquitous stare on the cover. This release has an awesome presentation- as do most Ant Zen efforts. The music is not near as morbid as would be thought with the second track "Desolation" sounding similar to COIL. The third track is a mildly entertaining piano piere. Dreamy and gothic periodically with a precisely directed German voice. A few tracks frighten with the street beat scenario, but in all a stimulating miasma of industrial, dance, goth and experimental generally creating favorable impressions.(B)

MORGION- Among Majestic Ruin CD (Relapse)- MY DYING BRIDE fairly average doom. It's bands like this that make doom boring due to lack of unique characteristics. Anti-epic sound. Surprise me! I'm fucking close minded!

THE MOON LAY HIDDEN BENEATH A CLOUD- The Smell of Blood but Victory CD+MCD Box (World Serpent)- While this remains one of the most intriguing groups to me lately, I honestly can not find appropriate words... I attempt with: magickal, tragic, beautiful... see what I mean? Nevertheless, a masterwork with genuine medieval clarity.(S)

MOONRISE- Engrafting Feelings Demo- Dark poetry gone awry for this "melodic doom" band. Interesting song character but a little undefined. Sappy. "I'm so emotional but I still play in a death metal band." More original than most of the CDs we've reviewed tonight.(D)

MORGUL- Lost In Shadows Grey (Napalm)- Really evil barroom keyboards, otherwise it is want to be black metallers following the path of least resistance.

MORTES SALTANTES- Demo 2- Actually this demo is quite decent once the keyboards drop out leaving the traditional metal accoutrements. Black metal with a bit of thrash and a healthy dose of lead guitar, charging full drums(a definite benefit) a reliable bassist and a solid vocalist. Side one has the most potential whilst the flip has one instrumental(a keyboard piece) and a track which starts out sounding to speedy for their own good, only catching my attention once it slows down. Lyrics, if translated properly, could be decent. Their bio discusses the links between corpse paint, which they choose to wear, and traditional Japanese theater which also utilizes face paint . True, it's only a demo but with a good production I could listen to this more than once (Mortiis' Saltines).(B)

MORTICIAN- Hacked Up For Barbecue CD (Relapse)- Amazing! Truly prototypical a bit too late. B-grade horror movie intro, blistering programmed cheat beats, electric charged chugga mute guitars and flubby bass with deep throat growls and groans. 24 songs with titles like "Cremated",, "Cannibal Feast", "Ripped In Half",... A thanks list longer than two ANTHRAX albums(including "Harley Davidson(stop selling out)"). A true piece of art. Contact these dudes via their e-mail addresses.(Wormbile)

MORTIFIER- Promo '96- Wondering how this could justify a listening free from prejudgments I proceeded with intense skepticism. Everything about this screams black metal sheep but with a bit more practice and the development of a few weak passages and an attempt at honesty I could come to enjoy this quite a bit. Surprisingly old school at times with lots of drum break downs, albeit sloppy in execution, but no more so than the purveyors. Generic in presentation I hope for a heart felt future.(B)

MORTIFY- Promo '96- I feel they are trying to get an old horror movie sound going, but it doesn't quite work and comes across as a maniacal beast.... they should tune their guitars differently and play progressions on other scales than major ones to achieve this sound properly. Typically forgettable as bands go.(S)

MULTIMOOD SAMPLER- V/A CD (Multimood)- Sweden's ambient, electronic label releases a compilation chronicling 10 years of labor4 and love. Only one of these releases have I heard before, ASMUS TIETCHENS, which is an excellent funeral dirge. 16 tracks, 10 artists and almost 80 minutes worth of music, covering the globe with continuity, range of influence and harmonic, ethereal scapes. Somber and relaxing.

MY DYING BRIDE- Like Gods Of The Sun CD (MFN)- Love this, sorrow that, forgive, repent, sin, kiss me. Just what the fuck are these randy romantics blathering about? Some of it is borderline closet christian. Anyway, this flogging of a dead horse is simply a lot of palmuted SABBATH doom metal, and really no more than what one can expect from this band.(MS)

MYSTERIA MITHRAE Compilation CD (Athanor)- Absolutely stunning release along the lines of Cthulhu. What we have, in case you could not guess, is a collection of songs pertaining to the practice of religion known as Mithraism, An impressive, diversified demonstration of representative interpretations of homage: Philippe Laurent and LES JOYAUX DE LA PRINCESSE, BLOOD AXIS, ENDURA, ERNTE, ALLERSEELEN, Lonsai Maikov, SCIVIAS, and DISSONANT ELEPHANT. If you have heard any of these bands before and liked them I would imagine this could do you know wrong, as everyone puts in a determined performance, and I would only pass up one track.(B)

MYSTICUM- In The Stream Of Inferno CD (Full Moon)- One of the last "classic" early Norwegian black metal bands, MYSTICUM have finally released their debut over three years after Euronymous had announced his plans to do so on DSP. Well, most of the songs were previously available on their unavailable demos so 'ITSOI' was not the most exciting thing for myself. Still this band should be noted for creating a somewhat unique sound by addition of computerized drums(Robin says drummers are bummers) to the mix evoking a truly harsh grating feel... perfect for too many amphetamines. A great band... I think there future lies in a more "industrialized" vein but this is definitely a milestone in the story of black metal, if only it would have been released a few years ago.(S)

MYSTIFIER- The World Is So Good That Who Made It Doesn't Live Here CD (Osmose)- Despite the awkwardness of this band throughout the years (summarized by the album's title for example) they remain a favorite within the Descent camp(well, by the editor anyway). MYSTIFIER create a unique sound in a scene full of cliches and imitators. They walk down an entirely different path to brew their truly occultic metal music. Once again a raw SODOM-like(minus the lack of timing) riffing is presented in MYSTIFIER's unusual, sinister way, accented by the top notch doomy passages, guitar solos, and this time an unusual tenor operatic vocalist, which, although awkward, time presents as a jewel in the crown which is MYSTIFIER. Experience a real underground occult metal band. Most people hate this band!(S)

MYTHOLOGICAL COLD TOWERS- Sphere Of Nebaddon CD (Sound Riot)- MY DYING BRIDE without the violins and some death metal chugga guitar riffs with no vocal fluctuation. In an attempt to attain epic heights they achieve mediocrity. A Karmanik touch helps marketability.(D)

N.A.O.S.- Melancholia CD (Cacophonous)- Daoloth must spend every moment of his life pondering musical projects and avenues of exploration, I find this release more enjoyable than the last N.A.O.S. effort and I suppose this would be a tremendous hit with BAUHAUS freaks, goth dance clubs and darkwave aficionados. Very dancy and upbeat and I keep referring back to Peter Murphy's voice and numerous other similarities. Curious to see how the presentation to this will be approached. Look for an interview in Propaganda. Imagine a goth band playing for a masquerade ball in the 1600's. Mildly appealing.(B)

NAGELFAR- Jagd Demo- He's gonna get a soar throat. Sounds like NASTROND's black metal. Text is solely in German. This has the same approved elements that every other band is employing at present. I can only imagine whose offered them a contract by now. It sounds like the singer is screaming for water.(D)

NASTROND- Age Of Fire CD (Napalm)- Inspired by LaVey, who hides from any undue and unwanted association. Listen to these titles, 'Winged Phallus', 'Womb of Chaos', and 'Opening Of The Mouth'. Influences obvious and many, from the intro to the epilogue. Just as I was saying, "If this doesn't go into metal I may enjoy it for a few listens,"... oops. We are wondering if this is what AT WAR sounds like entangled with the egos of Karl's mentors in a rasslin' match to the death. Ultimate typewriter drums provided by Arganas. Very super-villian. The random, perverted occult imagery doesn't let us proceed farther than 3 songs. We love this band!!(D)

NASTROND- Toteslaut CD (Napalm)- This label is currently amazing me with all the mediocre shit they are shelling out and NASTROND take the crown of the shitthrone (or is it shit throne) with this. I mean, is it too much to ask the musicians to learn to play their instruments before recording their music? The performance on this is absurd... NASTROND has gained a bit of hype for their "extreme" remarks regarding race, etc... but it's all been said before(and will again), yet still it seems to shade all the simpletons. These people will have different views in two years time. Let's also so something about the paint-by-numbers cover art... can we buy this album in Swedish K-Marts next to the He-Man dolls.(D)

NECROMANTIA- Ancient Pride MCD (Osmose)- "Our gods became Satan and Satan became our god." A line from the title track. Thus far this release is quite as good as their previous material, only difference in the concept which is obvious when one sees the Aryan figure with the stature of a Hellenic deity. Interesting orchestration at times, but it is coordinated to where a flowing mood is mostly kept. Save the occasional rock solos and brief rubberband bass appearances, this MCD should be enjoyable.(MS)

NECROPHOROUS- Underneath The Spirit Of Tranquility CD (Cat's Heaven)- Yes tranquil like the uneasy grave or the moment before you make the first incision on tender flesh. Mythical, religious, ritualistic, mechanistic, narrative- many moods of introspective sound. Some uncomfortable moments with goofy voice effects. All in all slightly disappointing but fair company for an extensive evening of depression and displacement.(C)

NEGURA BUNGET- Zirnindu-sa Demo (Bestial)- Transylvanian black metal, geographically speaking. This is also their claim to the assumption that they are "true", no doubt. An attempt at creating melody but their result is too forgettable. At least the drum sound is more appealing than 90% of the CDs we've been listening to as of late.(D)

NEVER KNOWN- Twilight's Last Gleaming CD (Eibon)- Despite the application given to the visuals I see this tenebrous sound as coming across far closer to monochromatic, with a few cold hues splashed about for effect. This also seems to have more of an INADE/space ethereal quality. 'A Crystal Prism Can Make Miracles" caresses with an icy touch, if not only for the employment of more sources then all the others.(B)

NIDEN DIV. 187.- Imperium (Necropolis)- Will the real ZYKLON-B please stand up????(D)

NOCTURNAL EMISSIONS- Thaumuncrape an'goo CD (Solielmoon)- Another band eclipsing their second decade, or damn near close. This reminds me of VASILISK and the bogpipes utilized lure O'Malley in. "Wow", I believe was the expression. At times squealingly beautiful, at others hinting of a lop-sided amusement park ride, hovering the line between cultural, ambient industrial and even worldly. Another pleasant surprise from this label.(D)

OBERON- s/t CD (Prophecy)- Deep keys trick me into a trap consisting of embarrassing love ballads. Don't start crying but this could be the title track to an 80's highschool sweetheart flick with all it's trappings. Not into it.(S)

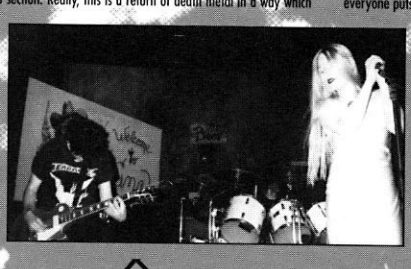
OLD MAN'S CHILD- Born Of The Flickering CD (Hot)- Another hyped Oslo black metal band featuring a bit of input from DØDHEIMSGARD guitarist Aldrahn, mastered by Mr. Garm of ULVER, etc. Once again, as is the case with most of the hyped bands these days, we are left with a performance which, although not poor or mediocre, does little to pull it out of the stewing mass of similar bands from Scandinavia. Perhaps a similar comparison would be with MAYHEM's 'De Mysteriis...' at times production wise(Garm may be responsible for this)... Nothing really outstanding here.(S)

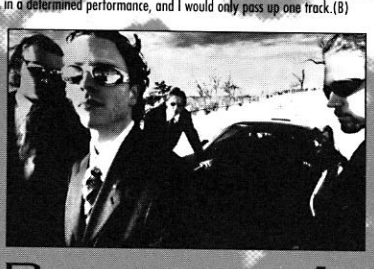
ONE DARK EYE- Manic Depression Cass. (Mother Savage Noise)- I've never been to Pittsburgh before but I did live in Philadelphia for a short while years back and it was an ugly town. When I listen to music, abstract or not, I tend to pictoralize and project as to what the sounds represent, where they derive from and how they mutate. ONE DARK EYE provides more than enough visuals to induce an anxiety attack and Joseph mixes this when he needs to ease off the harsher projects. Geez! Soundtrack oriented works. Crazy chemical psychosis and urban metalions abound here. Still full of the sentiments of a man trapped in an ugly city.(B)

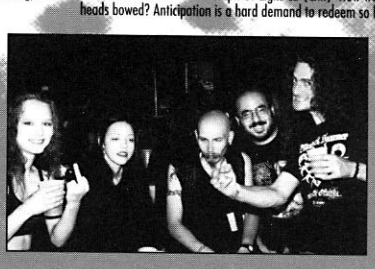
ORCHIS- He Walks In Winter 7" (Cryptanthus)- "He Walks..." could easily be an interpretation of an old Manson family song with flutes, maybe similar to what HOPE ORGAN did. The live song "Jennett" is festive, with female vocals and brings to mind DEAD CAN DANCE due to it's percussive elements. "Megaera" is a "version" which I am guessing means an adaptation of the same song from elsewhere?The beginning is reminiscent of "Death Of The West" by DEATH IN JUNE until the female vocals eloquently hover over and through the music. COCTEAU-ish maybe, although I'm sure there is a more applicable comparison, par chance a Projekt act. (B)

ORDO EQUILIBRIO- 141 7" (CMI)- Once again CMI pours all into this release being a picture 7" within a full colour picture sleeve. The music is fairly decent, being two tracks not released as of yet elsewhere. One track is an acoustic based piece very similar to those on the new CD and is titled: In the grassy fields where the world goes to sleep. We kissed the world goodbye. It's extremely short. The flip is more of an anthem: Nature seeking equilibrium. War for the principal of balance. Catchy and reminiscent of Boyd Rice's rantful approach, this one makes up for the flip by the hands of the clock.(B)

ORDO EQUILIBRIO- The Triumph Of Light CD (CMI)- How were we clutching our hands, lids lowered, heads bowed? Anticipation is a hard demand to redeem so how could this possibly attain godhead...







P A R A D E

The first listen was grossly inappropriate and inevitably doomed. Upon second listen, stage set, lights extinguished, mind in proper setting, smoke scrapping the length of the corrior and smitten with bliss and the light of the flame, I'm somewhat convinced. 13 psalms of which 7 contain scripture of sin, lust, pride, indulgence, love and inspiration from previous efforts and the only drawback being the DEATH IN JUNE cloned works *(not a drawback in this case since it's better than DIJ-Stephen)*.(B)

ORPHANED LAND- El Nora Alifa CD (Holy)- Holy has a sound unique and it's not one I quite appreciate, with a metal based romanticism compounded with goth, new age and eastern elements. This CD seems to emanate from this mold as well as from the light, despite the MY DYING BRIDE characteristics and probably numerous more appropriate comparisons, but again, it is not my realm. Very modern death riffs in the structures and the oozing sensitivity do not appeal. I envision lots of white shirts with puffy collars and sleeves.(B)

ORPHX- Fragmentation CD (Malignant)- The sincerity behind this one gives it weight that many a CD lately fail to convey, although I must admit that the approach visually and textually leaves me pondering what exactly their focus is, if their is one. Hard industrial, for the most part, with moments of a less intense velocity interspersed throughout. The sounds are electronic, sometimes magnetic, but most often driven with fury. Boisterous and loud, at times like SIGILLUM S, at others more introspective, some beat driven songs, periodically catastrophic. Dispersive titles and graphics may hinder this but it should appeal to about everyone's electronic tastes in fragments, at least, throughout it's +70 minutes(B)

P2- Blunt LP (Releasing Eskimo)- Is this a joke? This is beyond minimal into what sounds like a mastering error(I hope it is). The most interesting aspect of this LP is the screened sleeve.(S)

PALESTINE CHARLAMAGNE- Godbear CD (Solielmoon)-"Minimalistic piano" pieces originally realized for church commissions in the mid to late '80's. These three pieces are all highly pivotal and harpsichord like in some manner, or they bring up images of some frenzied climax which only exacerbates itself, much akin to middle eastern music.(B)

PAZUZU- Awaken The Dragon CD (Dark Matter)- After two years the few of the ABMS bands who moved us here at the Descent camp returns with a CD about the folkloric Dragon, as approached from a variety of cultural avenues. Unfortunately most of the influences don't stand as diversified since they are all reproduced via the same synth, which is excessively repetitive. The lyrics are not out of control as was the case for some parts of '...And All Was Silent' but the same delivery on almost every song(very few other vocalists), like the music, tends to bore me after a while. Most of this was solely composed by Pazuzu himself.(B)

PENTACLE- The Fifth Moon (Damnation)- It's generally true that when a band covers a song that the homage to said band does not usually end there. Hail to HELLHAMMER once again and here are the other influences I myself hear throughout the 5 song 12" picture disc: SODOM, AGNOSTIC FRONT, MERCYFUL FATE, DESTRUCTION, ANTHRAX.(B)

PERKELE- Erotic Circus CD (Hammerheart)- Strange release from a metal label... PERKELE give a low-skill and studio budget version of early 80's new wave with non-effective male vocals. This insults the POLICE.(S)

PREDOMINANCE- Obliteration LP (L.O.K.I.)- After the excellent "White Ashes" MC, I am pleased to hear the first album from this German act. Mindswept electronics and noise placing your mind in a steel coffin beneath a mass execution is well fed by this bleak and cold album. Pure doom of high caliber and desolate reality, smiling on dark satanic wavelengths.(S)

PROSCRIPTOR- The Venus Bellona DLP (Dark Age Productions)- Proscriptor of the famed ABSU presents his own workings here on a double LP complete with poster and 8 page booklet. This comes across as a gypsy band of occultists and jesters, seductresses and rogues conjuring and performing, honoring and celebrating. A most robust feast rejoicing one's heritage, infusing it with bits of influence from around the globe. Sampled bagpipes(!) and some over the top vocals make me want to squirm. Acoustic in the extreme with heavy CURRENT 93 influence devoid of thrash metal trappings. The bravest challenge since CELTIC FROST performed "Mexican Radio" can be heard here, "I Ran" by A FLOCK OF SEAGULLS and my brow is still curled in bewilderment.(B)

PSYWARFARE- Holocaustal Angel 7" (Wicked Witch)- Once again exquisite packaging from Dwid, the man who is sincere about what he does and for that credit is deserved. The first song on side one "From The Womb To The Tomb" is Dwid's best so far. Amazing! The second song is Blondie, thus forgettable. Crispin Hellion Glover is on here as well. This record, as with all of PSYWARFARE and Dwid's projects in general, are a testament to pop culture in the here and now. Try it on 45, too.(B)

PSYWARFARE- From Xicatepec with Love CD (Vinyl Communications)- Relentless this Dwid character seems to be with a 5 track epic at over 70 minutes. The human heart magnified is our introduction, with it's frequent inconsistencies, panic attacks and bursts and murmurs. 'Whisper Bred Deceit...', the third track is a relayed blip for the first 5 minutes and then a rapidly collaged homage to the Japanese master. The last track is Denny's credo looped to dementia. Dwid, you forgot to thank Crowley.(B)

PUISSANCE- Totalitarian Hearts 7" (CMI)- Limited to 880, of course, these guys strive to react to every idea that is conceivably politically correct. Well, since their last release was so pitiful I thought for certain that I would despise this one as well, but I find this one to be fairly decent, on the grounds of the musical approach alone. "Command and Conquer" is a obscure industrial piece, minimally bombastic, coming across more like some dark ambient track with some sampled dialogue. "Stagnate and Perish" starts off mellow enough but launches into a rapid beat, fuzzed out, with the hilarious rants on the philosophy of PUISSANCE, being all too prevalent in my life at this time with two books I've been in the process of reviewing. You guys all need some new idols.(B)

RAISM- The Very Best Of Pain CD (Kron-H)- MINISTRY or NIN interrupted with a special news bulletin is what the first song sounds like. Does it get better? NO! Possibly worse. Sci-fi music with an unintentional sense of humor. (B)

THE RAPE OF THE HOLY TRINITY CD (Hot)- Hot has finally set itself up alongside Malicious as a breeding ground for corpsepainted, bullet belted, spiked out black metal ferocity and profanity. AURA NOIR steals the show with a creation of their own and an amazing cover of 'Heaven's On Fire'. DIMMU BORGIR presents "Devil's Path" , a remix from their new MCD. OLD MAN'S CHILD ruins "Black Magic". The DØDHEIMSGARD song is ferocious and fantastic. The other acts give us somewhat standard, but acceptable, presentations of their mentors. STARKNESS creates a melodic ethereal somewhat new agey piece which seems out of context on this otherwise dim release. Commendable that it is a full 68 minutes long.(B)

RASTHOF DACHAU- In Der Strafkolonie 7" (Steinklang)- Excellent power electronics by this Austrian project. Heavy grumbles and rhythmic noise mixed with high-end shrieks. The best track, "Zyklon B", features some anguished screams and factory-type sounds. The vinyl is nice and thick with black and white photos, one of a concentration camp and the other of a deformed Jewish dwarf. Though is has been done to death, it's nice to see holocaust imagery fetishized. Limited to 300. Happy hunting...(TAINT)

REGARD EXTREME- Resurgence CD(AR-GOAT)- It had to be too beautiful to be true. Some of the most exquisite full colour packaging I've seen of the Book of Kells and related imagery. Never judge a book by it's cover is often hard to recall when so many releases flood the world. With choices so vast one must have a decisive factor. Unfortunately this is simplistic pseudo organ, and I mean simplistic. Two finger scaling without any sense of foundation. This is embarrassingly rudimentary.(B)

REPTILICUS- Temperature Of Blood CD (Cat's Heaven)-An interesting debut from this fledgling German label. REPTILICUS are no longer, I believe, and this is a re-release of a limited cassette from 1990(on Iceland's Hel label). REPTILICUS hail from the beautiful city of Rekyjavik, which in itself is quite interesting, and portions of this were recorded by Hilmar Orn Hilmarsson(HOH to some of you) which is ñalso quite notable. REPTILICUS give us, with this release, almost a split album; one half being quite standard trudging guitar/industrial material, the other half a mystical and astral concoction of electronic music. I feel the later mentioned is the most interesting aspect of this collection, although I wouldn't venture so far as to claim it genius.(S)

RICHARD RAMIREZ- Deconstructed Hand Device CD (Deadline Noise Recordings)- 2 tracks presented in a manilla envelope which has been camouflaged with a rustic paint job. RR has caused a bit of a rift in the noise scene due to his penchant for certain tastes and images. All the better I say. Regardless of opinions I enjoy segments of this CD quite a bit. The blathering frequencies for the first 6 or 7 minutes of the first track "Killing Capacity" leave me unmotivated but then it gets heavy and dense and tasty. Almost monumentous for a good while of the lengthy 31 minutes. "Unparalleled Brutality" may be pushing things a bit far but the second track does retain immense interest. The start of this 30 track reminds me of ATRAX MORGUE with it's low end rumbles punctuated with random thunderous booms with complimentary background nuances which manipulates itself into a hundred magnified chirping baby birds, feedback sonic over-distortion and waves melting all in it's path. Interest fades in and out throughout and this would be ultimately more powerful if it was mastered effectively.(B)

RIEFENSTAHL- Comp. 2xCD (VAWS) Fine idea, but I think the respect was lost when the fascist bands lined up for the chance to appear. Remember, boys and girls, Leni was cursed for most of her life by her alleged connections and actions, while never supporting the NS out of choice. So this is just another excuse for bands with fascist/right tendencies to appear on a comp. Not that I mind. Highlights: TURBUND STURMWERK, ALLERSEELEN, NOTHWENDE, even SWIRLING SWASTIKA's are ok. Otherwise an odd mixture of electronic based groups from across the spectrum (including KAPO!), some for better, others for worse. The included 100+ pp book includes info/ photos/ visual artists (how the fuck did 'Beltane' get in there??)/ and other related matters. Honestly, a bit of a let down.(S)

ROTTING CHRIST- Triarchy Of The Lost Lovers CD (Century Black)- RC finally make their debut in Amerika. 9 songs comprise this release totalling just over 45 minutes. The music this time around sounds clean and crisp, full of melodies and mid-paced compositions, including a good heavy dose of death/doom kind of reminding me of MY DYING BRIDE at times. I have always liked the bass sound on RC albums and this fulfils. This is by no means an earth shattering release but a good, solid effort which should goin them a decent reception in the land of the dead.. Nice artwork! (B)

SAMAIN- Indomitus CD (Bloodless Creations)- 10 songs from an Australian band that is not war metal! Sounding like weaker versions of numerous bigger bands I found this to be a bit dull. EMPEROR influenced vocals for the most part with an unsettling high end production which helps add an atmosphere conveying a DIMMU BORGIR approach. Rapid drum blasts ala CRADLE OF FILTH and weak fluttering guitar not near as effective as MARDUK. All of these melded together in fairly weak mundane compositions leave me felling empty and all with a healthy dose of heathenish sentiments. A Marx quote with stress upon it's being taken out of context(what point are we making here?) helps add to the triteness.(B)

SARTINAS- Demo CD (Shadows Of Michelangelo)- Just as the promo sheet states- 4 songs, 22 minutes, for the Swedish heavy/melodic death metal filing. The sound is more apt for a tape than a CD, fairly linear in all aspects with an unrelated intro, a innocuous singer that sounds like he'll be hoarse when he's done and once again the ever bewildering kick drum sound.(B)

SCORPION WIND- Heaven Sent 2LP (Twilight Command)- Well! Hmm! I can't quite decide how I feel about this. If you don't know, this project is essentially Boyd Rice, Douglas P. and John Murphy. What it sounds like is Boyd's "Music, Martini's and Misanthropy" with DEATH IN JUNE and nostalgic sentiments slipped in here and there. Boyd mostly covers vocal duties here and I think I'm just getting sick of hearing his philosophies. It's the same rhetoric we have heard before. Ridiculously drawn out and tedious, I can't help but feel cheated. Aptly pressed on brown colored vinyl. (Nice!-O'Malley.)(B)

SIEBENBURGEN- Loreia CD (Napalm)- I heard that the fake Runhild also handles all of the instruments, which bring us typical northern BM sound. Not all so bad, then again... not outstanding in any way with it's female operatic vocal (heavily masked in reverb usually) and folk influenced instrumentation.(S)

SIGH- Ghastly Funeral Theatre MCD (Cacophanous)- They are drawing the curtain of heavy metal more tightly around them and that's just fine, albeit stranger (not straighter) with each release. Sometime the vocal is too exasperating for it's own good, although the lyrical concept is further into the Japanese tradition. Unusual keyboards as always, but even moreso now, this has always been part of SIGH's charm however. 'Shikigami' is the gem here with it's fine intro and dissonant bridges. Strange 'outro'.(S)

SIGILLUM S- Live Assault CD (Verba Corrige)- We can only imagine the full assault of the performance here, but we have no choice but to settle for only the audial portion. SS' form herein is futuristic rhythm machination, guiding fellow mechanisms, gears, and toolings under their will and order. Intensely visual as they are even audially, the structures I've seen them build I feel are mine alone, as each has their own.(S)

SKYFORGER- Semigull's Warchant Demo (Self-released)- Whilst I can't quite say what it is that has attracted me to this demo, as few anymore deserve even a review, I am continually listening to this one. Despite the fairly silly vocals, aka DARK THRONE gone sour, the music must be what keeps harking me back. Fairly simplistic, heavy, old school based metal with a good strong dose of hypnotic repetition. Traditional plus cultural(flute, shepherd's horn and rattle stick) instruments give this a fresh feel and the cultural song in their native tongue truly wins me over. A historical lesson, indeed, on the last defenders on pagan rites in the Baltic lands.(B)

SLOGUN- Lustkiller 7" (Bloodlust!/Circle Of Shit)- The best thing about SLOGUN's vinyl debut are the smiling kiddies on the front and back covers. The noise is heavily delayed vocals and low-end electronic rumbles. One side is Andrei Chikatilo, the other Henry Lee Lucas. There's no indication of SLOGUN's sexual tastes or how wither of these sex murderers relate to those tastos, but if the victim photos are any clue then SLOGUN is headed in the right direction. Limited to 100 copies. Good luck...(TAINT)

SLOGUN- The Pleasure Of Death Cassett (Labrynth/COS)- Another self released SLOGUN item, True Crime Electronics. The tape herein is excellent. Heavy, decisive mid-range accelerations and decreased tones with heavily affected vocals which sound solemn and righteous. 8 tracks with lyrics hinting to crime and it's progenators, rarely being blatant or specific with regards to cases, if ever. Impressive time-consumptive, constructive effort. The energy here spreads and disperses out from a central point not unlike a stab wound radiating blood out from the pint of entry, staining a garment crimson. Excellent vocals most of the time glinting in the pale, pale light.(B)

SMELL AND QUIM- Jim Seed Collector 7" (Praxis Dr. Bearmann)- A tasty little sperm colored release here. Wallowing through quagmires of electronic squiggles and fractured pulses, maneuvering through sludgy coagulating sticky pools S&Q delight my senses with their peculiar samples and perverse sense of humor rarely found in acts of this nature.(B)

SMELL AND QUIM- Meat and Pregnant Asian Special CD/ Cassette (Old Europa Cafe)- These prolific outpatients give us a combo package this time limited to 666 copies. The cassette herein does not really do too much for me as it seems more tuned to S&Q's caustic cornucopia of frustratingly dirty and perverted humors. The CD on the other hand impresses me once again, especially since the laws of probability dictate such things. The first track "Pukka Fukka" is subtitled into two tracks and one of those is divided into a further 4 segments. It could as easily be 100 segments as these covers techno influenced space sounds to white noise, filling the ensuing spectrum with an abundant source of shapes and sizes, providing cohesion amongst the numerous. The 2nd song is live thus skipped and the third track "Islam Über Alles" is an amazing hallucinatory journey for the first 24 minutes of it's half an hour life span.(B)

SPEAR OF LONGINUS- Nazi Occult Metal Demo- "That guitar sounds terrible." O'Malley. These Aussies surely fit into the whole scene with a tape entitled such. They want to be from the Northern Wastelands rather than down under. Good vocals but the music can't even be saved when the FROST influences pervade.(D)

SOLAR- A Music Travelogue Compilation CD (Solielmoon)- 13 tracks focusing on what is sometimes summed up as "global ambient". A few of the names should be familiar to some out there: O YUKI CONJUGATE, RAPOON, Paul Schultze, A SMALL, GOOD THING, RAKSHA MANCHAM. An excellent display of 75 minutes worth of field recordings(Buddhist Funeral Procession and Hi-Fi Market) to traditional percussion to electroacoustics and beyond. More psychological or meta-physical approaches to music along with the stimulating anthropological aspects bridging many cultures and approaches blurring the lines of distinction. Excellent!(B)

STONE BREATH- Strange Familiars 7" (Hans/Eye)- A purchase on a whim solely due to the beautiful artwork adorning the cover, and the fact that it's limited to 300 assures me that it won't be around soon. Maybe comparable to many of the acoustic World Serpent acts with the nature and magick edge, only this lacks the catchiness, the webs of poetry(such as Tibet weaves) and it also could benefit from a better mix, or mastering,. Impossible to hear the vocals and minutiae going on. Commendable alone for the use of instruments in their authentic form.(B)

STRATUM TERROR- Pariah Demise CD (Old Europa Cafe)- The passion absolving execution as recorded by STRATUM TERROR, being the mind behind RAISON D'ETRE. A 5-page comic strip of a condemned man walking his last stretch, destined to face the guillotine. Similar in essence to RAISON D'ETRE but of a darker concoction, yet still somewhat somber at it's core. Glistening with sweat and filth awaiting the turn of the key amidst the matted straw and excrement, I feel not terrified but relieved that my time has come. I walk past curious eyes knowing full well that their time will also soon come.(B)

SUBKLINIK- 7" (Waggletone)- This is an odd release considering the label's name and logo. This is dark, ritual ambience of good caliber. Sermons of Apocalypse fed out on a bed of brimstone. This is very welcome and hopefully will not slip by unnoticed.(S)

SUPERFICIAL DEPTH- Digital Superimposing CD (Side Effects)- One track and pretty minimal at that. Here's what you do: hit a low note on your keyboard and let it carry on endless waves... very superficial.

SUTCLIFFE JÜGEND- We Spit On Their Graves CD (Cold Spring)- Collecting material from the 10 x cassette of the same name, this remains mainly an archival piece. Once again the roots of severity in theme and sound in power electronics and noise is brought to the light. Truly punishing disc.(S)

T.A.C.- A Circle of Limbs CD (Cthulhu)- Far more ersatz than 'Apotropaismo' and more obviously entrenched in the encompassing embrace of Tp Mega Therion and his predecessors with evidence in song titles: "Cults of the Shadow" pts 1 and 2, "The Rising Current" and "Hidden Gods". This sounds more similar to the ritualistic works of the historical community rooted in the same arcana (AIN SOPH, SIGILLUM S, ZERO KAMA, etc). 11 tracks recorded over a 5 year span representing the distant qualities of the mind. (B)

T.A.C.- Apotropaismo CD (OEC)- Dropping their full moniker in the age of brevity we are presented with this Italian outfit's latest works. Oceanic and ritualistic whilst geared toward the shadowed side of the path, a modern production however, feeling overdone. Interesting to note that so much time and energy has been devoted to accumulating diverse instruments and textural homages run rampant, even in the context of the CD and titles yet all vocals can be distinguished as solely English. A wonderful blend of the new world with the old in all it's guises.(B)

TAINT- Whoredom CD (Praxis Dr. Bearmann)- I guess the maxim "hate to love, love to hate" is never more applicable than here. Vocals start to play a larger role in this work and the snippits of his dealings with prostitutes and ex-prostitutes(victims?) lie throughout the CD. He seems almost happy and nervously cheerful picking up the whores, and the ice cream truck in the background of one trick adds a perfect touch. Packaged in a three panel fold out sleeve with text, photos and warnings to the victims. The music sounds almost a bit more psychedelic in a noise induced way, yet still maintaining that good ol' Waco barrage of relentlessness. A blowjob at a church for $15, hallelujah!(B)

TAINT- W.A.D 7" (Self Abuse)- The second in the monthly series by East Coast power label, Self Abuse, all dealing with specific human anomalies who've acted upon their violent fantasies; and yet another cauterizer by the madman from Waco. Dry sounding in a mechanical, industrial sense more akin to the rash of Germanic electronics purveyors. Wesley Allan Dodd's(WAD, duh) voice runs underneath the weight and density of the sounds comprising parts 1 and 2 of "When You Meet A Stranger". Potent!(D)

TARTAROS- The Grand Psychotic Castle MCD (Necropolis)- Before you skip this review, let me say that well not entirely ground breaking, there are some interesting sounds going on here. Sort of the Hammer Horror feeling (keyboard based black metal) without half of the cheese. The interesting progressions and approach leave me with a feeling that the MCD is too short... quite uncommon these days!(S)

TERRA SERPENTENES- Various Artists 2CD (World Serpent)- An affordable set of all unreleased works from 26 bands under the banner of WS Distribution including: COIL, CURRENT 93, TMLHBAC, SOL INVICTUS, ... It is easy to see from this sampler that most of the songs offered are understandably not on the bands own releases and most of them seem to be extra fodder, but a few worthy exceptions hover above: ARKKON, KAPO!, ORCHIS, ELIJAH'S MANTLE, SHOCK HEADED PETERS, Roger Doyle, SOMEWHERE IN EUROPE.(B)

THIRD AND THE MORTAL- Painted On Glass CD (VOW)- Heavy intro! I'd say this was on the wrong speed if it were a record. Way more experimental and darker. Nothing against Kari, but everything released after she left the band sounds more mature. Sceptical for numerous reasons, all of which fall away and crumble with all the other unfounded prejudices. The second track sounds like an era recording set in a European marble mansion in the late 1800's. Undecided upon their main influence they opt to blatantly tip their hats to a wide array: SABBATH, D. Galas, DCD, 70's electronic meisters, ad infinitum. (D)

THOROFON/ IDPA- split 7" (State Art)- The first in the "Documents Of Neural Assault" collaboration series and a powerful initial strike indeed. THOROFON come across as an excellent low, slow force not unsimilar to GENOCIDE ORGAN, maintaining calculative. IDPA put forth a track "Thou Sun" which leaves much to the imagination as it is a monotonous atonal piece reverberating for close to 7 minutes without fluctuation. Limited to 200 copies, as I believe each piece in the series will be. Keep your eye out for this and others which will surely be outstanding testaments to a healthy burgeoning scene.(B)

THRONE OF AHAZ- On Twilight Enthroned CD (No Fashion)- This is one of the real Swedish legends, creating memorable and innovative material on their demo and first album tracks in the early '90's. One of the first midpaced and heavy black metal groups in the early era when originality and innovative black metal groups were not all so rare as our drought today. So, naturally, I became quite excited when this arrived... unfortunately, THRONE OF AHAZ have, in my opinion, slipped into the sea of mediocrity on this, their second full length. The spark which captured me anyway, is missing, creating an unmemorable sophomore release. Especially disappointing is a butchering of "Black Sabbath" in which no actual vocalizing is attempted... (S)

THY REPENTANCE- Ural Twilight Autumnalias CD (Undead Wood)- Well, it's Russian but beyond that there's not much reason to give this attention. A drum machine and some peculiar VONDUR like over emphasized effects on top of a terrible production, both dense and dank. It opens up a bit and starts to resemble numerous European black metal acts of lower rank. An odd array of styles, some of which come across as preposterous, especially when accompanied by the grim vocals. 11 songs.(B)

THY SERPENT- Forests Of Witchery CD (Spinefarm)- The influence of DIMMU BORGIR and GEHENNA has been widespread through '95 and '96 in the underground metal scene, just as EMPEROR and IMMORTAL were two of the biggest influences too many fledgling bands through '94 and '95... what is it with Norway? Although having produced some of the best metal bands of all time the current mind set is Anti- Norway... what? I don't understand this... I guess the metal scene is quite cyclic with a 2-3 year attention span in general, not counting the straggling bands whom never seem to have an idea of their own or a concept of originality, or those whom are good performers and musicians but tend to do what has been done better before, thus THY SERPENT pays homage to GEHENNA and DIMMU BORGIR. Although well done, it is not ground breaking in any sense of the phrase.(S)

TIERMES- CD (Elfenblut)- Diamanda throws us all for a loop on this one. The packaging and song titles scream rave art to me, which is highly unappealing so I proceed with more than a bit of caution. Once again I am faced with the bizarre combination of the organic appreciated through the synthetic. The first track "Unorganic Being" sounds probably like numerous other guitar pulsings and thick chords droning for 11 plus minutes. "All Sources Are Yellow" sounds like the humming intro to MONUMENTUM's LP but clocks in at 5+ minutes. "Psilocybe Semilanceata" is sparse industrial, cold veils of vacuous sounds, deep within abandoned infrastructures. The last 3 fade onto obscurity and I'm left with an undetermined feeling.(B)

TRIAL OF THE BOW- Rite Of Passage CD (Relapse)- This long awaited full length of this excellent Aussie group leaves us further within the eastern influenced music than before. Perhaps the most memorable is "Serpent" an opium layered journey in the Sulton's palace and harems deep in Persia. This is very well done and TOTB's use of eastern music stems throughout the music, not just in choice of instruments. An excellent piece of work if not for the "File under" suggestion on the back of the jacket.(S)

TROLL- Drep De Kristne CD (Damnation)- I'm a bit surprised to see this band already with a full length seeing that nearly every act can achieve that point which was considered difficult even only a few years ago. TROLL have improved enough to reach this status deservingly however, creating a fatal slew of symphonic black metal highly inspired(in my opinion) by the first EMPEROR and ENSLAVED albums- production wise. Where most of these other demo bands(releasing demo bands) fail is in the department of capturing an individual characteristic... TROLL have seemed to capture that spark which sets them apart a bit from the others. While not the most phenomenally unique album in recent days, "Drep De Kristne" stays interesting enough to deserve a bit of attention.(S)

TULUS- Pure Black Energy CD (TULUS)- The music only hints at being "black" but mostly it sounds like ex-hardcore enthusiasts doing metal. The song titles on the back of the CD are in English but once you peek inside you find them all in Norwegian, as well as the lyrics. Slimy! Decent gothy segments in a MONUMENTUM kind of way and 1 hear remote DARK THRONE inspired CELTIC FROST romanticism, but this whole CD feels thin, too often. 31 minutes in all and a nice cover and tray card photo.(B)

TURBUND STURMWERK- Der Letzte Sieger Ist Der Tod 7" (L.O.K.I.)- Unfortunately my German skills are nearly nonexistent, being a typical American(in that respect anyway), and thus my literal understanding of this act is a bit limited. We really enjoyed this act's LP around the headquarters here, and this follow up is a bit more surprising due to collaboration with TEUTONIC GROOVE and CAAD during recording. We have a much more rhythmically based foundation, which TS builds their fortress of samples and sound upon... more rhythmic in a "modern" way rather than the primarily "classical" vein of the LP... and well done. Heiner Muller and Ernst Junger became inspiration for these two tracks for the individual of today with a heart in the heart of Europe.(S)

2/3- Various Artists CD (Hands)- A fairly artistic little package here and a nice presentation for the works herein. A strong opening by DEUTSCH NEPAL who present a sinister track capturing the essence of panic and terror. Their second song is based around a racing pulse and something akin to being strapped helplessly to a hospital gurney, aching , drenched in a cold sweat, anxiously preparing for the moment at which point your body succumbs. WINTERKLATE is the other highlight of the CD although not typically my style. Staggering, drunken, periodically rhythmic metallic industrial. Scientifically or technologically hinting at concern for humanity and misplaced wisdom. DIVE has a Cold Meat base infected with a world beat sentiment expressed obliquely and electronically. MENTAL DESTRUCTION due little for me with a sound reminiscent of something off WaxTrax, juxtaposed clamorings. ESPLENDOR GEOMETRICO round this off and I can't figure out why this band has a cult following. Maybe this is a new approach for them but the techno influenced work has got to go.(B)

TYPHON- Unholy Trilogy CD (Warmaster)- I suppose this is a release several years in the making yet it's sound comes as a surprise to me as it's a bit different than their previous material. With a old metal approach TYPHON this time uses complete punk rock and lighter song structure at times reminding me of 7 YEAR BITCH more than anything else... otherwise we have some not too intense black metal with a different approach. While though refreshing, it is not the most interesting thing to my ears these days. Lie, lie, lie...(S)

ULVER- Madrigals Of Night CD (Century Black)- Sometimes I wonder if all the Norwegians get together and clasp hands, sit about a round table with a pentagram painted on it and chant to Satan asking what to do next. Satan must be big on basic, primitive black metal with a homey feel because

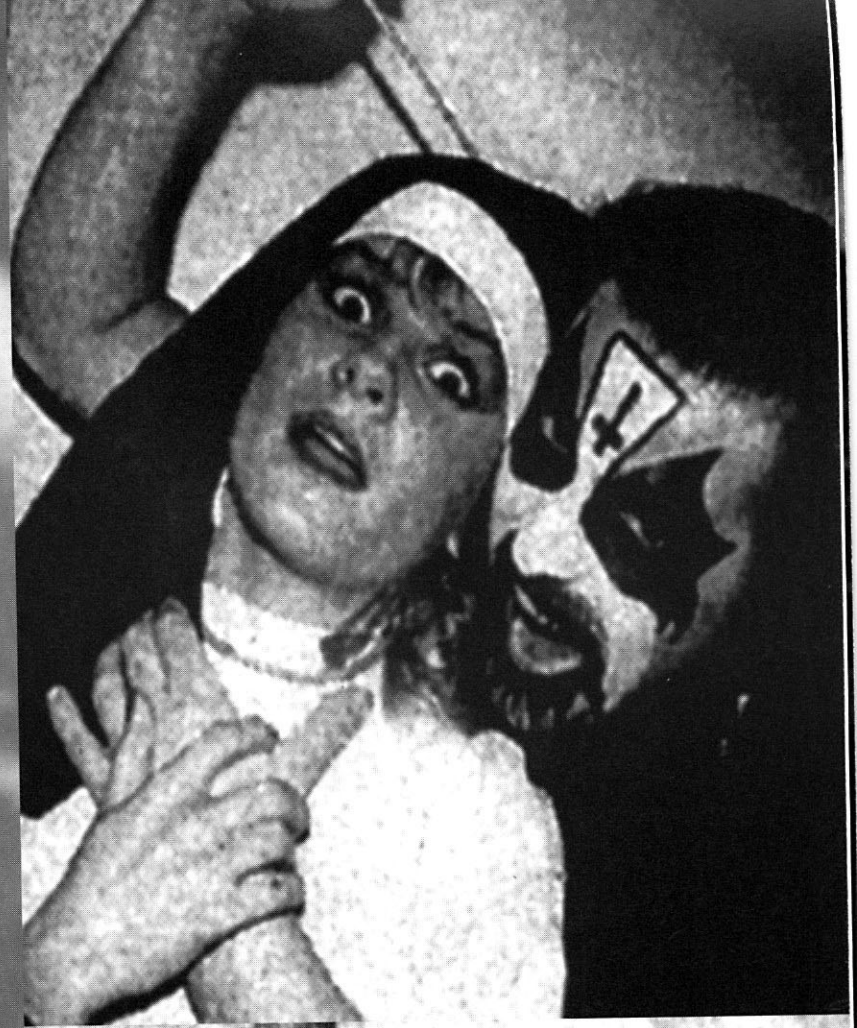
that's what seems to be big lately, in Norway. It's raw ala DARK THRONE's 'Transylvanian Hunger', it's fast and it all sounds the same.(B)
VALHALL- Heading For Mars CD (Metalion Not Found)- Yeah, they're still smoking those guitars, but this time they manage to catch some of the SAD heaviness too. I have to say that this beats most limey doom I've heard since moving to this country. They have a sense of humor and take the piss... just look at the coverart.(S)
VENOM- The Second Coming CD/Video (?)- Actually it doesn't say who released this, as there is no NEAT logo anywhere. Anyway, I wondered if it would actually happen? I mean who hasn't gotten back together? Peter Frampton, The Eagles, DIO, Maiden, Sex Pistols, and on and on. I first started watching the video of this and instantly became embarassed. They basically milk everything they did oh so many years ago right down to ripped t-shirts and Mantas says the same lines as in the Hammersmith videos. If you just listen to the CD all you really have to put up with is them yelling at the crowd to yell louder. They are going bald, Cronos sounds like his throat can't take singing anymore, Abadon is more of an oaf and they don't even feel confident enough to perform solos anymore(come on Cronos, roll around for us again!).(B)
VINTERLAND- Wings Of Sorrow CD (No Fashion)- Once again I find another No Fashion release from an act whom capture all of the motions of what has defined dark Swedish metal in the past few years: speed, melody, agony and aggression which doesn't lose the thread of the riffs. Set a tortured vocal across the top and viola! The problem here is not lack of talent or writing ability but rather unique definition and character. And those typewriter drums, ugh! Excellent design and presentation convinces me this band has promise is they can hone their talents in capturing dark atmosphere into their own unique blade.(S)
VITAL REMAINS- Forever Underground CD (Osmose)- Forever shafted in the past, they finally got a decent deal with Hervé. Heavier-than-thou good old underground DM with excellent quality and performance. The drawback being the tacky anthemic lyrics from the title track (very hardcore!). Very good for what it is, but I guess I could be a bit more enthusiastic.(S)
VONDUR- Stridsyfirlysing CD (Necropolis)- I suppose this album will gain a bit of attention due to it's unusual selection of imagery.... Darth Vader and the Empire figureheads from the classic Star Wars movies. Considering just about everyone has experienced these movies I guess the imagery is quite effective, and humorous. It and All(the ABRUPTUM line up from the excellent "Evil" 7") come together to create some unusual tomes ranging across realms of grinding extremities(excellent) to crusty punk like anthems, to soundtrack like passages. These 17 tracks were written over the past 10 years and it is refreshing to hear some honesty in performance. This is definitely an album to hate for the more artsy among us but I'll appreciate it's primitiveness extremely, thanks. It is especially listenable when immersed in the bog. The violin solo sums VONDUR up in concept I believe. Kill yourself.(S)
WAR AGAINST SOCIETY- Various Artists 3LP set (Praxis Dr. Bearman)- 6 bands to a side here and predictably both good and bad. VICTIM KENNEL looks and sounds more like CRASS gone power electronics meets Amphetamine Reptile vocals. CON-DOM and GREY WOLVES both deliver the goods to make this all worthwhile. MILITIA presents bleak nationalistic trudgings and dirges with a vague suggestive presentation. STREICHER sounds very old school P.E. with rudimentary approaches and LAW can't hold my attention. My mind drifts to other tasks so I've still not given that one my full attention. (B)
WORLD DOMINATION I CD (OSMOSE)- 13 bands and 15 songs with SWORDMASTER being the only band on both CDs, and rightly so as they deliver the best songs overall. VITAL REMAINS have great music but I can't take the death metal vocals. IMMORTAL strikes with a new track from 'Blizzards...', DARK TRANQUILITY, GEHENNAH, ENSLAVED, INFERNO, and a few others. By far the better of the two.(B)
WORLD DOMINATION II CD (Osmose)- The second in the Osmose "what's up" series. 15 bands and the same amount of songs. The stand outs here would have to be SWORDMASTER and the last band whose name is a bit of a mystery. Also besides metal you hear DISCHARGE rip-offs who sound like all the others that have existed throughout the years, The ROCKING DILDOS, and a wealth of other varieties fluctuating closer to hardcore than metal.(B)

MAGS

THE ABYSS #1- "Brought to you by the American Echelon of the Black Order of Pan-Europa", the ABYSS is a 50 pp. photocopied zine dealing with Aryan/NS topics. Not whining, but certainly armchair in it's approach, this seems to come from the same slant as too many others on the fringes of the metal scene. The B.O. motorcycle club, revolutionary work, a pathetic article on paganism- a National Socialist view, a nutty aliens and aryans article. My favorite line: "The decline in the birth rate is due to causes associated with prosperity, technology, and feminism." What? (B)
ABYSS RITUAL #5- Admirable for it's attempt to produce magick from bands with no spark and a few which I'd admittedly give a fair chance simply due to the fact that they do have something to say after all. 64 pp. of mostly interviews with SKOGSPOTEN, Nordic Vision, NORDLYs, INTO THE SUNLESS MERIDIAN, GOLDEN DAWN and lots of South American clowns. Typed and photocopied with intent and conviction.(B)
AHNSTERN #4- "Heimlicha Welt" translates as the hidden world as is a reference to the Erdstalle's which are to be found throughout Bavaria. Mysterious underground niches, none of which are the same, but all of which bear similarities to others. Deeply mysterious, these caverns have still not been deciphered, leaving the "experts" much room for imagination. Rudimentary information on these subterranean rooms, including Kadmon's experiences visiting two such Erdstalle's and a poor interview with an author on the subject who continually reiterates the fact that we don't know what they represent.(B)
AHNSTERN #5- Kadmon gets more personal this time around with his conception of the Heathen Home, Heidnat. Heidnat, in his eyes embraces paganism, ecology and resistance. We have the ever referred to sentiments of Nietzche, Crowley, Spengler and others, even going so far as to include a few anarchists in the list of cited minds. A positive view of volkisch appreciation, a realization that the home is where the roots have been nurtured and therefore where they oft' times best develop and flourish. Never crossing the line into hippy idealism, this bright outlook, even if naive, is a healthy one which many should examine and ponder.
AUDIO DRUDGE #7- And where have you been hiding all of this time? This 68 pager comes with a cassett…e including tracks by the bands interviewed in the issue(ALLEGORY CHAPEL, LTD., TGVT, CONTRASTATE, CAUL, TESENDALO and OBLIVION ENSEMBLE). Beyond that the issue is primarily ads and reviews, which normally I would be disappointed with, but seeing as the veritable cornucopia flowith beyond my wildest expectations you can probably rely on this ditty to let you know what esoteric delights are worth hunting down.(B)
BLOOD BOOK #5- Dwid's hilarious, biting self promotion flourishes in this new issue complete with insider information, current obsessions and honest, scathing commentary. Next in line behind the likes of Answer Me! and Sewercunt. An abridged TAINT interview, Boyd Rice, Lisa Carver, Francis Bacon, MERZBOW and the kids of Whidbey High(retarded kids doing bad rap songs), who contribute 2 tracks to the 7" which comes with this, graced by INTEGRITY on the flipside.(B)
DAWNRAZOR #2- A colour cover and only 36pp but I enjoy this magazine like few others. Insiders who have both wit and a knowledge of the music that is incorporated into their zine. Also not limited to one genre, with the likes of Tom G. Warrior, LYCIA, VED BUENS ENDE, MONUMENTUM, BDK/Karmanik, GEHENNAH, Michael Gira, and plenty of others. Very few ads, a presentable layout, and some great reviews which remind me of those within the pages of DESCENT lately, brutally honest and damned hostile at times(see WONGRAVEN). Great!(B)
EXSTINCTIO SENSUS #2- Longer in the making I believe than the last DESCENT, Raul has accomplished what he set out to do. Good solid, albeit basic, layout and excellent interviews delving Cinto each bands distinct approach with some of the worst acts around. Raul knows what he likes and dislikes and continually, obsessantly makes the point clear time and again. The upside: GEHENNA, DIMMU BORGIR, SKOGEN editor, EINHERJUM editor: the down side: PERUNWIT, HEFEYSTOS, DEAD CHRIST COMMUNE, KAMPFAR, etc...(B)
DEVILCOSM #2- Despite 1/3 of this being a catalog this is a much better read than other pan-European/ American efforts. 38pp of substance and fairly thick reading treading into Black Flame territory. I disagree with about every article in here, which is a good thing, because who would someone want to surround oneself with preconceived ideas which soften the mind? Articles include: The Eugenics of Art, Melod Diabilus in Musica, Dialectics and Aeonic Magick along with a few athers.(B)
FREEZING FLAMES #1- Nothing spectacular but decent interviews with a number of bands who do not excite me in the least. An Icelandic metal scene report, GODSEND, THY SINISTER BLOOM, DARKWOODS MY BETROTHED, IMMORTAL, THE SUMMONING, THIRD AND THE MORTAL centerfold and the typical business. (B)
HAMMER OF DAMNATION #5- Once again a great issue from Finland. HOD is one of the zines which inspired the birth of Descent. With a broad view of dark music in general rather than a specific genre(although goth seems to be quite enjoyed by the editor). Classy layout and presentation although a bit more care screening the photos might be preferred. FIELDS OF THE NEPHILIM, MORTIIS, BRIGHTER DEATH NOW, BLOOD AXIS, GHOSTING, etc.(S)
GRIMOIRE OF EXALTED DEEDS #6- A hilarious read! Never taking themselves or their passions too seriously these heshers sure know how to call it like it is. No bones interviews and reviews till this along with a few poems, a fictional tale, an excerpt from a book purporting "Jesus was not the son of God", free classifieds and an article calling LaVey on his plagiarized religion. Questions asked with a "If thy were to expound upon thy philosophies ..." feel, and always with incredible sarcasm and wit, this zine makes for a refreshing read in a scene seriously devoid of humor.(B)
INNER SOURCE #8- Another large, slick, US, broad-scoped music zine. 78 pages with SKEPTICISM, ANCIENT, IMPALED NAZARENE, CANNIBAL CORPSE, blah, blah, blah. Boring interviews which is a shame as the reviews seem fair and clever enough not to become mundane. An excellent article on the Necronomicon and the difference between the Ancient Ones(dark) and the Elder Ones(light) and the abuse, unknowingly, by black/death metal bands. Splendid!(B)
KOGAIONON- Set up like Slayer, this Rumanian zine contains a fair amount of material, but just how valid most of that material is could be debated. For instance this issue contains BURZUM, MONUMENTUM, AGHAST, ALLERSEELEN, OPETH and VED BUENS ENDE, although they don't really count as it's strictly informative, without any new words from the bands themselves. Otherwise it has short interviews with MOONSPELL, LACRIMOSA, IN THE WOODS, GEHENNA(fools!), LORD BELIAL, EVOL, lots of bands on Holy Records.... Fairly mundane interviews but a decent broad scope of music is covered and the editor will hopefully pursue his own source in the future, to make this one more worthwhile.(B)
MACABRE #3- Wow, this is an amazing improvement for the great Italian zine, and it's now offered free (send a couple bucks for postage) worldwide. A wide range of bands are presented in an adequate layout... and they are EARTH freaks which is always good. ATARAXIA, SIGH, DEATH IN JUNE, MONUMENTUM, etc. Nice.(S)
OUTBURN #4- A 44 pp of 'Digital, spiritual, conceptual'. Artistic, gothic, cybervoids of computerized zeal. LYCIA, TRANCE TO THE SUN, ruby lipped pale woman, men clad in black and frilly white, www., email, fashion fetish. Reliant upon words gleamed from words, rend in black, white and metallic blue. Watch it grow.(B)
TDR #5- A 54 pp half size zine from Belgium with features on AUBE, ATRAX MORGUE, BIG CITY ORCHESTRA, Richard Ramirez, Praxis Dr. Bearmann, and a few others, all with discographies. Information concerning related dark, noisier bands all presented in a simple, effective format. A good amount of reviews, all of which are highly praise worthy, which leaves me feeling a bit skeptical.(T)
VOICES FROM THE DARKSIDE #9- Unfortunately, this is the last Voices for a while as Frank seems to be fed up with it all. This is one of the greatest metal zines of the 90's and the excellent interviews with Cronos and Mr. Warrior sum it up. Really knowledgeable interviews and reviews... BUY THIS, especially for the Cronos spotlight which is one of the best I've ever read with him.(S)

BOOKS

THE CONQUEROR MANIFESTO- Evoked by P. Helmkamp (Of God's Disgrace)- Peter Helmkamp, prime mover behind the metal bands ORDER FROM CHAOS and ANGEL CORPSE delivers his tome of Heretical Supremacy, bluntly put , an embracing of the "strong" over the "weak". Part philosophy, part poetry imbued with social darwinist polemics and part adaptation of previous doctrines with a tilt towards Lex Talionis: Crowley, LaVey, Redbeard/Desmond, Hitler, et al. A beautiful presentation set in perfect bound with legible font and sleeved i n black with silver embossment. A fairly stimulating read(only 83pp) and certainly worthy of some attention if solely for the fact that it is literature! Praise the man for that alone. This could persuade me to seek out some of the listed sources for further reading. "There exists no dogma, we oppose because we think". Right



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enough, and I must confess that I find many of the stimulating correlations, drawn references and parallels in here simply neo-dogmas which have not truly adapted a large enough following to bear the stigma; dogma.(B)

DEATH SCENES by Nick Bougas (Feral House)- Mr. Bougas unearthed this legendary scrapbook which was composed by LA homicide detective Jack Huddleston in the second quarter of this century. It has been published for us by the notorious Feral House. Mr. Huddleston made it his hobby to collect the photographs of his cases and this book presents them in glorious form, 168 pages with his notes in his original handwriting. Suicide, mutilation, murder, accidental death, it's all here... the grim underbelly of southern California and a testament to the brutality of American culture. Excellent.(S)

ECOFASCISM: LESSONS FROM THE GERMAN EXPERIENCE (AK Press ISBN 1 873176 73 2)- A small publication, at 73 pp., split into two sections. The first of those being 'Fascist Ecology: The "Green Wing" of the Nazi Party and it's Historical Antecedents' by Paul Staudenmaier develops through the recounting of Germany's long history of "Green" fascism. Theories developed on the ideologies from the 1800's and turn of the century which s8till radically confound those even today. Numerous voices far ahead of their time voicing concern for endangered flora and fauna, reforestation programs, restrictions on industrial developments, organic farming on grand scales, etc. These men who coined phrases such as "Ecology" just so happened to be virulently anti-semitic and linked racial purity with ecological purity.

Distressing for the author, he establishes the ecological foundation as an important and vital one which is hindered and, in his mind, completely off mark with it's racist and fascist implications. An excellent source for the foundations of a movement which most think to be solely a modern one.

The second essay ' "Ecology" and the Modernization of Fascism in the German Ultra-Right' by Janet Biehl is primarily a modern day compendium of ecological and fascist/racist groups and their platforms, ties and power within the present political climate in Germany. An interesting dip into the differences between Amerikan social Darwinism versus the Germanic version and the latter's naive notion that human institutions could be projected onto the nonhuman world.

Both authors are concerned that the pioneers of the ecological movements are being misrepresented, or not fully represented, as more often than not their racial policies are skimmed over when praising their ecological concerns. Racial agendas are kept cryptic or are disguised to lull in the lay people in an attempt to win converts, and this they fear will help to re-create a fascist/ racist platform with power.(B)

THE EYES by Jesus Ignacio Aldapuerta(Critical Vision ISBN 0 95 23288 3 6)- Headpress has been dropping this man's name for at least a few years now so you can imagine my anticipation awaiting the "Emetic fables from the Andalusian de Sade". 88 pages in length and I'm left wondering what the hype was all about. Certainly, from the introduction it would seem that Aldapuerta was one of the few individuals who practiced what he preached, if even that can be believed. The short stories in here read like some bad death metal lyrics steeped in scatological references. To compare him to de Sade is pathetic and wholly misleading, not to mention an insult to de Sade. No stories are given space to develop, no clever theological attacks, no philosophizing, no grace with words. A rather poor translation does little to help.(B)

MIGHT IS RIGHT by Ragnar Redbeard (Mike Hunt)- The venomous, century old classic for satanists, social Darwinists and the blood crazed is reprinted here by the new wizards of armageddon- Mike Hunt Publishing, and even they try to outdo themselves, already, by inciting both Anton LaVey and G.E. Hawthorne to write the covers for this yellowed rant. LaVey purports this to be the work of none other than Jack London, the penultimate inspiration for countless iconoclasts in the music world (and beyond) from Boyd Rice to Raism to Type O Negative. It reminds me of 'The World's 16 Crucified Saviors' and other such reactionary works which started becoming trademark in America around the turn of the century vehemently attacking the 'old, standard' on the soil of this great nation: attacking any religion other than a self-styled one, decrying the "equality" issue, delving into the 'conspiracies' of the world against the "strong men", looking upon the opposite sex as little more than booty to be won, hailing the constitution yet crying about the injustices being perpetrated upon these virile bodies more and more each day. Even if you've never run across a pirated copy of this chances are you've heard it all through the mouth of others. An excellent presentation regardless.(B)

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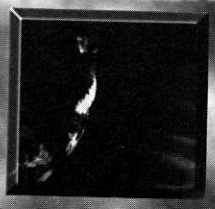

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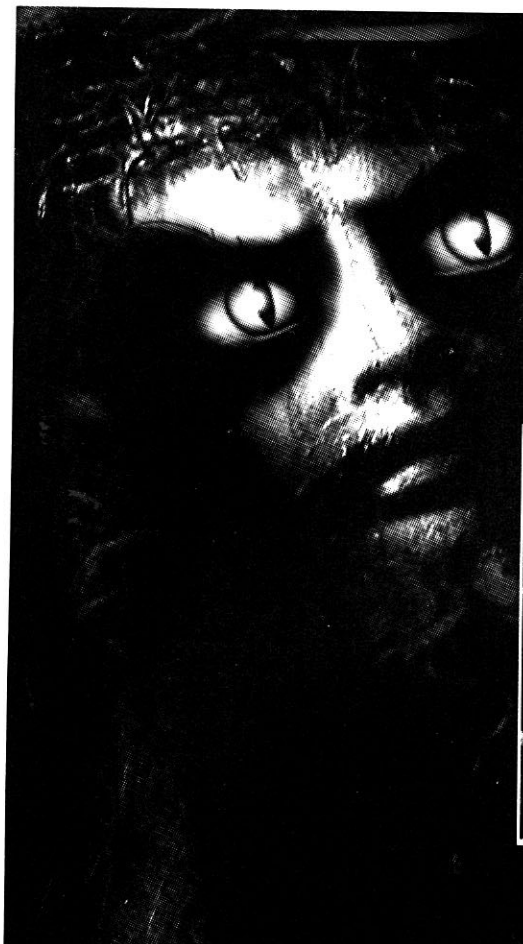

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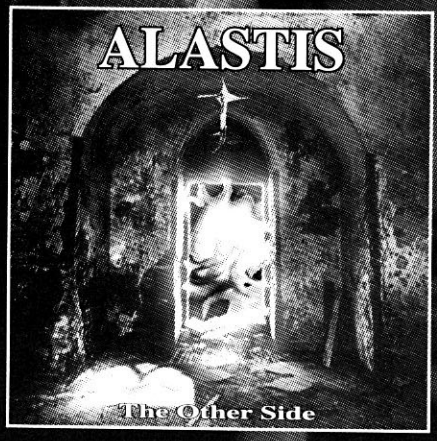

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